

THE A B C OF ART

JOHN HALDANE BLACKIE





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By JOHN HALDANE BLACKIE



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To my friend

D. G. A. Fox

*"Not pleasure but the sense of power . . .
is the true object of the fine arts; and their
final purpose, therefore, as truly as that of
Science, and much more directly, the exalta-
tion of our human nature."*

DEQUINCEY.



INTRODUCTION

"What says this fellow?"

THIS book is not a complete treatise on art. It aims, first of all, to present a workable theory of what art is, and to show why it is important; and secondly to suggest ways of thinking about it which will lead to the greatest possible amount of profit. I have assumed that the majority of readers are unfamiliar with the psychological and aesthetic jargon which distinguishes most books on the subject, and I have therefore avoided, as far as was humanly possible, all long and alarming technical words. The few that remain were so essential that to have left them out would have been to have sacrificed real, for apparent, simplicity. I have further assumed in the reader, a willingness to think for himself. Art is largely a matter of ideas, and no amount of information can replace the absolute necessity for individual thought. Although the reader may find some questions answered, he will find an equal number, at least, that have to be solved by himself. It has been no part of my plan to provide an easy short-cut to the appreciation of art. Such a short-cut does not exist, and "They see not clearest who see all things clear."

One of the curses of modern education is the tendency to suppose that the laborious acquisition of facts is, in itself, important. The aim of those who oppose this tendency and would counteract it, is to encourage people to think for themselves, rather than accept the third-hand opinions of fifth-rate thinkers. I have resolutely tried not to dictate my own views to the reader, but, instead, to provide him with enough material to stimulate his powers of thinking. Even as it is, the limited space at my disposal has compelled me to be more dogmatic than such a frankly conjectural subject as art justifies. The first two chapters state the general principles of the subject, and the remainder show how these are applied in the special manifestations of poetry, painting and the rest. A knowledge of the first two is assumed in the remainder, and it should be remembered that a good deal that is said of one branch of art can be applied with slight modifications to others. The sections which follow Chapters III to VII are intended to provide the reader with skeleton outlines of the development of the several arts, as well as to name some of the works that are most worth while reading, hearing or seeing, as the case may be. Anyone familiar with the history of art will detect their incompleteness, and they are planned for those who know nothing whatsoever of the subject.

Certain branches of art have, for various reasons,

been omitted. The minor arts of pottery and illumination, and those concerned with pure design, needed a lengthier treatment than could be here accorded to them. The Drama and the Opera have been left untouched for the same reason, and also because they are financially inaccessible to the vast majority. The Novel, too, seemed too large and specialized a subject to be properly or valuably discussed in a book of this type.

Finally it must be stated that this book lays no claim to originality. Some of its more important sources may be found listed in Chapter X. To all these writers, and to many others, I owe my grateful acknowledgements. I am also indebted to the editor of the *Forum* magazine for permission to reprint portions of my article *Bad Verse and Bad Readers* in Chapter IV, to Diana Rubin for material on the history of sculpture and architecture, to Evelyn Shrifte for material on the history of music, to Professor Donald Sprague and Mr. Hanford Waterfield for reading the manuscript, and for some suggestions and criticisms, and to Mr. Christopher Nicholson for his assistance with the Chapter on Architecture.

JOHN HALDANE BLACKIE

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Note: An asterisk () placed against the title of a book in the text signifies that it is discussed in Chapter X.*



THE A B C OF ART

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS ART?

"Art," said the man of letters, "is the invisible made visible, the unknowable made known, the incredible made true." "Bosh!" said the critic.

THE task that we have before us in this chapter and the next is somewhat arduous. We have to compress into a few thousand words a complete statement of the nature of art, and of its importance to us in our lives. Many have tried to do this with greater or lesser success, and where opinions have so widely differed we must not expect to find the matter extraordinarily simple. Three of these opinions are mentioned below and rejected for reasons which are given. They may serve to give the reader some idea of the tendencies of aesthetic theories during recent years and form a suitable introduction to the theory of Values upon which this book is based. This theory seems to work better than any other, although it requires much more

evidence than is at present available, before it can be marked off as an established fact. In spite of its rather complex nature I have thought it best to state it here rather than employ some older, more familiar theory with which I cannot honestly agree. In so doing I have made a greater demand on the reader, but the time is long overdue for us to begin facing truths squarely, and to "destroy the things that are broken." Those of us who have lifted up our eyes and have seen dimly a world less baffled and disenchanted than the world of to-day, will agree as to the necessity of this, and will be prepared to overlook nothing that may even remotely contribute to the greater freedom of the greater number.

BEAUTY

In order to judge a work of art it is necessary to have some criterion, some standard that we can compare it with, some test that can be applied to all art alike. The most popular criterion yet suggested is Beauty. Mr. R. B. Collingwood in his *Outlines of a Philosophy of Art* defines art as "the special activity by which we apprehend Beauty," and Mr. H. P. Collins in his essay on modern poetry asserts that "Beauty in the narrowest, as in the widest sense, is the condition of literary, as of all other art. No discussion of purpose or material must lead us to ignore for a moment this one essen-

tial unquestionable fact." This sounds delightfully simple. Beauty, a word which we are always using, which everybody understands, and which everybody all over the world can appreciate! The question appears to be solved. If a thing is beautiful, then it is a work of art. If it is not beautiful, then it is not a work of art. There is, however, one insurmountable objection to this, that, while everyone uses the word Beauty, from soap-advertisers to inhabitants of Sing-Sing, nobody can give even a moderately satisfactory definition of what it is. "But" would say Messrs. Collingwood, Collins and the rest, "everyone can recognize Beauty when they see it. Why worry about a definition, you pettifogging, gross-minded critic?" This implies that everyone has his own ideas of what is beautiful, and that if a man thinks a traffic-cop bawling at the corner of Broadway and Forty-third Street is beautiful, he is justified in describing the cop as an artist. While it is undoubtedly true that the personal element must always enter into our opinions about art, as about everything else, it seems desirable that we should have a rather more definite and reliable criterion. Beauty, that mysterious quality which defies analysis or definition, does not seem to supply such a criterion, and it is to be hoped that the reader will not be impatient or contemptuous when he learns that the word is to be left out of the discussion altogether.

FORM

Another writer whose theory has gained wide acceptance is Mr. Clive Bell. In his book entitled *Art*,* he has based a general theory of art on the almost exclusive study of painting. He finds Beauty too vague and misused a word to set up as a criterion, and endeavors to discover a certain quality which distinguishes works of art from every other kind of object, something that makes a picture essentially different from a sunset, a poem essentially different from a beautiful woman. This quality he calls "Significant Form," which he defines as "lines and colors combined in a particular way, certain forms and relations of forms, which stir our aesthetic emotions." There is nothing very new in this. Back in the eighteenth century a French clergyman called Dubos mentioned a special sort of sixth sense which was reserved for Aesthetics (the study of art). Although Mr. Bell expands his definition later in his book, there still remains an unanswered question: "What is an aesthetic emotion?" Without a satisfactory answer to this, it is of little use to know that "Significant Form" is the distinguishing quality of works of art. Mr. Bell further complicates his argument by utterly divorcing art from life, and making it some-

Note: An asterisk (*) placed against the title of a book in the text signifies that it is discussed in Chapter X.

thing which has no relation to any other activity, a little water-tight compartment all by itself. He writes: "To appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs, no familiarity with its emotions. Art transports us from the world of man's activity to a world of aesthetic exaltation. For a moment we are shut off from human interests; our anticipations and memories are arrested; we are lifted above the stream of life. . . . It is a world with emotions of its own." Apart from the sheer impossibility of achieving this sublime detachment from life, the practical-minded reader will inquire what is the use of something that simply assists him to escape from life, and not to solve its endless and varied problems. Mere escape can be achieved with less trouble by the excessive use of whiskey. For this reason, and because it seems to me essential that we should regard art as a part of life, having a definite connection with our ordinary thoughts and feelings, Mr. Bell's theory is here rejected as being altogether unsatisfactory.

INTUITION

A critic who, by his unfamiliar and sometimes agreeable way of saying nothing in particular, has gained much allegiance, especially in the Universities of Columbia and Oxford, is the Italian Benedetto Croce. In his *Essence of Aesthetic** he

makes an assertion similar to that of Mr. Bell: "Art, considered in its own nature, has nothing to do with the useful, and with pleasure or pain, as such." He goes on to say what the French writers said in 1850, that art "escapes all moral discrimination, not because a privilege of exemption is accorded to it, but simply because moral discrimination cannot be applied to art." *i.e.* Art and morality have no connection with each other. Later in the same chapter (No. 1 "What is Art?" he gives us the following extraordinary indication of what he considers art to be: "an aspiration enclosed in the circle of a representation—that is art; and in it the aspiration alone stands for the representation, and the representation alone stands for the aspiration," concluding, with apparent satisfaction at his argument: "art is perfectly defined when simply defined as Intuition." It passes comprehension how this cloud of meaningless words (we never discover what Intuition is) can have deceived sane men into thinking Croce an important critic. All that he has achieved is to take the ideas of other men and express them in the kind of language which is best described as "woolly."

Before seeking to discover a satisfactory answer to the question "What is Art?" it may be well to consider what are the best terms in which we can describe it. If all the words we employ are special ones, for use only in discussion of art, we may find

that they tell us nothing whatever. They will be unrelated to anything that we already feel, or know, or understand. If, on the other hand, we can succeed in defining art in terms of our everyday life, we shall not only understand it better, but we shall also understand why it is valuable. A man who has never seen rain can have little appreciation of an umbrella. He will be unable to relate the two. It will be our endeavor to relate art to life and see how the two things are part and parcel of each other.

DEFINITION OF ART

It will perhaps make the subsequent argument clearer if we begin with a bald definition, in half-a-dozen words, of what art is, or, to be more accurate, of what it seems to the present writer to be. Reduced to its simplest terms it is: "*The successful communication of a valuable experience.*"

It is, therefore, necessary to decide (1) what constitutes successful communication, and (2) what constitutes a valuable experience.

COMMUNICATION

Let the reader begin by imagining that he has had some ordinary, everyday experience, and that he wishes to give an account of it to a friend. He has, for example, paid a visit to the Aquarium in Battery Park, New York City, and spends the eve-

ning in writing a letter describing the objects he has seen. Provided he has a normal command of language he would find very little difficulty in doing this. He could describe it all with such accuracy that his friend would be able to visualize the whole experience almost as if he had been there. If the letter-writer was exceptionally clever, he would be able to make his friend feel as if he had undergone the same experience as himself. To employ the terms of our definition given above, the writer would have communicated his experience to the reader with complete success.

Let us further imagine that, during the afternoon, the writer slipped on a stray piece of banana-peel, fell and knocked his head. He wishes to describe not only the incident (*i.e.* the fact that there had been a piece of peel and the fact that he had fallen), but also his own *sensations* when it occurred. Here he would have more difficulty. He would find a sensation a rather difficult thing to describe, and would probably resort to comparing it to something. He would say: "I felt as if I had been hit by the Broadway Limited," or, if he was a little more fanciful: "I felt as if all the stars in the National Flag had suddenly got loose all at once." Upon the aptness of his comparison would depend the success of his communication, the degree to which his friend would enter into his feelings.

Once again let us imagine that our letter-writer, who is having an eventful day of it, observed, walking in Battery Park, a lady of (to him) unsurpassed beauty, with whom he fell in love at first sight. He wishes to tell his friend about it, and tries to find words suitable to describe the experience. He will probably discover that, however much he writes, he will be unable to express satisfactorily what he feels. Words will fail him. Those that he uses will seem dull and inadequate; a realization with which we are, most of us, familiar. We may describe it as the case of failure to communicate an experience, of an experience being too difficult for the means of communication at the writer's disposal.

It should now be clear what is meant by communication. It is the ability to make one man have the identical feelings enjoyed by another, and we have seen that it becomes more difficult as the experience becomes more abstract or complicated.

EXPERIENCE

Far less simple to explain, and to understand, is the second part of our definition—"a valuable experience." We must begin by stating exactly in what sense we are using "Experience," a word which is vague and uncertain in meaning. It is commonly used to mean something that the young are desperately anxious to obtain, and which re-

mains one of the consolations of middle-age. It is not in this bitter-sweet sense that we are using it here, but rather to signify anything which happens in such a way as to affect us, from falling in Battery Park, to falling in love. In some ways the expression "state-of-mind" is to be preferred instead of "Experience," but its use would make the argument apparently, if not actually, more complicated, and, if we understand the latter word to mean something that happens inside us, as well as something which happens outside us, something for which we are responsible, and can to some extent control, as well as something which comes to us without effort on our part, it will serve its purpose here. These qualifications are important and should be very carefully noted, before going any further.

We now come to the discussion of what makes an experience valuable, and it must be emphasized that the following is a highly simplified account of an extremely complicated matter, involving, as it does, questions of ethics and morality. The dogmatic standpoint that I have been compelled to adopt is apparent rather than real.

IMPULSES

Every human being is a mass of countless thousands of impulses, that is to say, potential thoughts and actions, things that he may turn into thought

or action, or prevent himself from so doing, at will. It is possible that these are the same in everybody, but environment, education, upbringing, and innumerable other circumstances make certain impulses dominant and others less so. A man, for example, who is born in a hot country will have less necessity for applying himself to the construction of warm clothing than, let us say, an Esquimaux. A man born in a cannibal tribe will have less difficulty in overcoming a distaste for human flesh than a man born in Boston. Tendencies toward a certain kind of behavior are dependent upon the circumstances in which we live.

It must next be understood that an impulse in itself is neither good nor bad, a statement which is likely to cause some dismay to those brought up under a particular code of morals. It is less revolutionary than it sounds. When an impulse has been turned into thought or action (two divisions of the same thing) its goodness or badness depends upon the results that it achieves, the situation in which it is used, and the other impulses with which it is combined or to which, by its existence, it denies activity. Good and Bad are not two labels which can be applied definitely to certain things. Something that is good in one set of circumstances may be bad in another.

An experience is, then, a combination of functioning impulses which have been set in play either

by unsolicited outside action or by our own desire. Most experiences are a mixture of the two. A ball hits us in the stomach (an example of the first sort) and this arouses in us a desire to weep, to throw it back, to laugh, to hurt the thrower. Which of these things we do depends on ourselves.

Now if we are composed of all these impulses it will be seen that the more use we make of them the better. Everybody agrees that we should make the best of life, but very few are able to do it. The reason for this is as follows. As soon as a man begins to bring a large number of impulses into play he becomes acutely and painfully aware that many of them will not fit together. Just as it is difficult to be in New York and Paris simultaneously, so there seems to be a conflict, an irreconcilable quality between our impulses. The reader, if he is in the smallest degree introspective, will understand this feeling better from his own experience than by reading an account of it.

We are beginning to see the goal for which we are striving. We see ourselves as containing all these impulses, and we want to give as much freedom as possible to as many of them as possible. And yet, conscious of the immense difficulty of attaining this end without disaster following, we hold back. Before going further a few instances may help to make the train of thought clear.

We have already spoken of Experience and its

attraction for the younger generation. And we are rather over-familiar with those who tell us, with grave solemnity, that all experience is valuable. We are also familiar with the questionable results of pursuing this policy. Of course, it is true that all experience is valuable, but the next step of the argument seems to be missed by the majority,—the obvious fact that some experiences are more valuable than others, and that some have such small value that they can be neglected without serious loss. The experience-hunters are, moreover, inclined to limit the word to a rich but restricted group of impulses, all more or less closely connected with sex. The result is that this group is given full liberty at the expense of all the rest, and the freedom of one group does not compensate for the lack of freedom of the others. In addition to this, the sex-impulses, by their very richness, need the admixture of others if they are to be successfully worked. Alone, they are as impossible as a diet consisting exclusively of whipped cream. We may describe the error of such a way of living as an inability to organize impulses. Similar examples, and these are in no way less culpable, are the religious bigot, the militarist, the gin- or dope-fiend,—anyone, in fact, whose dominating impulses are given so much freedom that they compel the suppression of the rest.

The cases just mentioned are extreme ones. But

we find the same state of affairs existent in the more normal, ordinary man who allows freedom to a fairly large number of his impulses, but represses many more, simply because he cannot work them. He possesses all these things which might be a means to good, but which he cannot combine, cannot reconcile, cannot run together. Everywhere he is aware of conflict, maddening and exasperating. In an age when we organize everything from our sportsmanship to our applause, we are woefully unable to organize the one thing that really needs organization—namely, ourselves. The ordinary solution of the problem, sanctified by traditional thought and behavior, is to play for safety, to liberate only those impulses that we can securely handle, labelling these “Good” and the remainder “Evil.” To this system there are many serious objections. The chief one is that those very impulses which it is most difficult to handle (the sex-group is again the obvious example), are those which are the strongest and the most important. They are, if repressed, apt to get out of hand without warning and to bring hopeless confusion with them.

We can now get a concise definition of what is meant by a valuable experience. A valuable experience is one in which impulses which normally conflict are reconciled, in which two apparently opposite ideas are made to work together, in which

freedom is given to impulses which usually cannot be successfully liberated. If we understand what we mean by the words, we can call a valuable experience Freedom, and a bad experience Conflict. This definition needs, it is hardly necessary to say, considerable expansion, which space forbids being made here. It should be used by the reader as a foundation upon which to build his thinking, as a starting-off place for his speculations.

SOCIAL QUALIFICATIONS

All this sounds suspiciously straightforward. We give ourselves as much freedom as possible and everything works splendidly. Unfortunately for the theorist, however, the system is modified by the fact that we exist, not merely as individuals, but as members of a community, and we have to organize our impulses in such a way as to give the maximum amount of freedom, not only to ourselves, but also to those with whom we associate. It is, for instance, undesirable that a man should be allowed to kill anyone at his pleasure, although there are many people who could be done away with with much advantage to the community. Society must protect itself at the expense, sometimes, of the individual. But, in this matter of freedom of impulse, we are concerned less with the laws of the land than with the conventions of the community. These latter get in our way more

often than laws. It may, of course, be argued that conventions are simply the laws made by society and common consent, and represent the most satisfactory level of living. This is a complete fallacy. No doubt every convention had a cause and a purpose, but that purpose may have been temporary and have ceased to exist long ago. But the convention remains sacred and inviolable, like some empty temple long-since deserted by its god, but still full of muttering worshippers. Many people who would not think twice before breaking the Volstead Law would rather die than run counter to the conventions of the society in which they live.

Thus it is that in this matter of freedom we have got an extremely difficult task before us. Everywhere the name of freedom is glorified, and everywhere she is flouted. We have seen how many give up in despair, making "Safety First" their motto. We shall see later how a few have succeeded.

The above is a very sketchy outline of a system of ethics founded upon values. The reader, if he is not wearied by much thought, may follow it up in more detailed form in Mr. I. A. Richards' *Principles of Literary Criticism*.* The opposition that such a system would receive would, of course, be immense. It is one of the characteristics of the supporters of a Moral Code that, while they will view with comparative calm an almost uni-

versal non-observance of their principles, they will resist with incredible tenacity any attack upon the principles themselves. Let Milton's lines be remembered:

"Truth, like a bastard, comes into the world,
Never without ill-fame to him that gives it birth."

To gather up the threads of this chapter we may re-state our original definition in slightly expanded terms. Art is first of all successful communication; that is to say, the ability to reproduce the experience in the mind of one in the mind of another. It is secondly the communication of a valuable experience, an experience which involves bringing into combination a number of impulses which normally seem to be irreconcilable. In the following chapter a more precise application of this definition to art will be made.

CHAPTER II

THE ARTIST—REAL AND IMAGINARY

"Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World."—Shelley.

MOST of us, when we think of artists, regard them in a somewhat romantic light. We like to think of them as dreamers with deep eyes, wanderers by lonely streams, strange other-worldly creatures, something between angels and wild animals. Or else we regard them with distrust. We make "allowances" for them, as allowances are made for people who are not quite right in the head. In their own particular sphere, it is said, they are all very well, but in the practical business of living they are hopeless. As for their morals, corrupted by continuous association with naked women, the less said about *them* the better.

POPULAR VIEWS ABOUT ARTISTS

People who hold these kinds of views talk vaguely about the Artistic Temperament, a phrase which has been bandied about by vaudeville comedian and

literary critic alike. One writer, for instance, has said that the Artistic Temperament consists in continually taking one's artistic temperature, and another, that it is all Temperament and no Art. The expression is commonly used to cover all unaccountable oddities and defects in otherwise respectable persons. Consequently it becomes the property of charlatans who wish to pose as artists, and when it is genuine, as, in a sense, it can sometimes be, it is laughed at, or reviled. Its symptoms, when it is a sham, can be readily studied in the neighborhood of Washington Square, New York. In its graver forms it is used by young men to excuse actions of which they are secretly ashamed.

Needless to say, such opinions as those indicated are not of the slightest value in understanding art and artists, although they may provide us with agreeable and easy reading. If we believe that art is important, we cannot seriously conceive of its creator as being simply a kind of maniac, not quite sufficiently dangerous to qualify for a lunatic asylum. In this chapter we shall try to find a way of looking at the artist and his work which tallies with the definition of art given above.

THE ARTIST'S MASTERY

With reference to that maddening sense of conflict with which we are all familiar, it may be said that, from time to time, we are also familiar with

the opposite sensation. Now and then, for some of us perhaps only very rarely, we experience a feeling of mastery, a sense of having solved our problems, reconciled our conflicting aims. At such moments the future seems to be full of possibilities, and the past a scene of labor and ultimate triumph. Such experiences are akin to those of the artist when he achieves a great work. It should not be thought that, on all these occasions, we are potential artists. The feeling of elation may be caused simply by a fall in the price of steel, and in such a case the impulses involved would not be likely to be important. But in the sense that we have achieved mastery, and a satisfactory organization of ourselves, we are undergoing the kind of experience enjoyed by an artist. It is precisely in the practical business of living that the artist is supreme. Many people manage to exist with tolerable success. The artist is one of those fortunate beings who live a life of freedom, fullness, and richness, undreamed of by the poor majority.

Although qualifications are apt to cloud the issue, one inevitable question about this last statement must be forestalled. If the artist is this magnificently organized creature that he is stated to be, why is it that the lives of many artists have been so remarkably unhappy? Byron, Shelley, Beethoven, Cellini, Baudelaire, Rimbaud—the names are innumerable. The reason why we are inclined to ask

this question, is that we have a rooted idea that happiness consists of a dead level of prosperity, contentment and lack of tragedy, untroubled either by moments of dire depression or by exalted ecstasy. It is the old game of "Safety First." Don't take risks and you will avoid trouble. Now the artist is essentially one who takes tremendous risks. He is often willing to sacrifice peace of mind and security for the rapture of short duration. Such a policy would not be recommended by the majority of people, but the majority of people have no notion of what that short rapture is like, and cannot, therefore, understand that it may be a hundred times more valuable than their own even, unvarying happiness. To achieve that supreme organization, the artist may have to undergo much mental or physical discomfort. As we come to understand and love great art, we may discover why he thinks this worth while.

COMMAND OF PAST EXPERIENCE

Now it will be obvious, from the foregoing, that an experience is not an isolated thing that happens suddenly and has no connection with what has gone before or is to follow after. It is the result of countless other things all of which contribute to it in various ways. It is also, itself, simply a stage, leading on to something else, whether it be to a greater achievement or, ultimately, to the dust, or

that problematical world beyond the dust. This being so the artist must have what is commonly described as a good memory, but a good memory in a very special sense of the term. The mere ability to recall facts or figures, or faces or scenes is of little assistance to him. He must be able to experience over again states of mind that he has enjoyed in the past. All of us, now and then, have known what it is for some forgotten sensation to come suddenly back, as we see an old face or hear an old tune. The artist must have this command over his past experiences so well-developed that he can summon them at will. He must be able to perceive their relationships to each other, particularly because the process of creation may take a long time, while the experience actually giving rise to it may occur at a single moment.

NORMALITY OF THE ARTIST

Having had an experience which he has found valuable, the artist is next concerned with communicating it. He will probably not think of it as a communication, but rather as the setting down, in a permanent record, of something that might otherwise be lost to him. All great experiences stir us to action, and this action, in the case of the artist, is the creation of a painting, a statue, a piece of music. For the outside world, however, what he creates is, in effect, a communication, a key to the

artist's mind, and we shall not be making a mistake if we regard it as such. As we saw in the last chapter the greater the experience, the greater is the difficulty of communicating it, and there is no doubt that many valuable experiences are lost to us through the inability of the artist to communicate them. Sometimes we have a feeling that the experience has been of value and has been sufficiently well communicated to make us realize this, but that something has been lost in the process. This we may call faulty communication. Another artist might have an experience of great value but which was of such an abnormal kind that it would be of value to none but himself. A certain degree of normality is, from our point of view, essential in every artist so that we may be capable of making a response.

ABNORMALITY OF THE ARTIST

Having mentioned the normality of the artist a word must be said on his apparent abnormality. In spite of all the stupid talk about the Artistic Temperament it is true that artists are inclined to behave a little queerly. They sometimes wear odd clothes, they talk in an odd way, and have a disregard for the ordinary conventions of society. After what has been said, the reason for this should be evident. It can hardly be expected that a man of such exceptional nature as we have seen the

artist to be, should behave in exactly the same way as a man whose thoughts are centered upon dollars, flirting, musical comedies, luxury, road mending, shoe-shining, and other similar activities, necessary perhaps, but of minor importance. The French poet, Baudelaire, has put this very concisely in his poem *The Albatross*: "the giant wings of a poet hinder him from walking." The essential thing is not to mistake these outward manifestations as being necessary characteristics of art. They can easily be acquired, are often exploited, and while being quaint, are not of the slightest serious interest.

It is frequently asserted that poets, and presumably all artists, are born and not made, and at this point we may find it useful to consider the truth of this. It is, it seems to me, only half-true. There do seem to be some people who are born with an unusual capacity for organizing their impulses, and achieving those valuable experiences that we have mentioned. But such people have to work to perfect their powers of communication. A poet must have practice in the handling of words. He must get to know their values. He must make the language flexible so that he can use it in the best possible way. In order to do this he must study it, and discover in precisely what ways it can be made flexible. A painter must know how to handle his brush. He must train his hand to do what he wants. He must study the relationship of colors,

and the devices by which he can indicate his meaning. A musician must know something of harmony. He must be acquainted with the capacities of the instruments or voices for which he is writing. All this may be called the spade-work of art, and all artists, however great, must undertake it. It cannot be lightly passed over, although some are quicker at it than others. It is, again, important to remember that mere technical brilliancy, however excellent, is not enough. The experience behind is the essential thing, and the Art School can never make an artist.

THE KEY TO EXPERIENCE

How then shall we regard the finished work of the artist, the record of his experience that he has left for us? The question is an important one, for the answer to it is the key to all understanding of art. How shall we look at a picture, listen to a symphony, read a poem, so that we shall respond to it as fully and completely as possible?

We must begin by being very careful to regard whatever work of art we are studying, as a link between our minds and the creator's. In itself it is no more than a highly complex key to the state of mind that it represents. Its value is in our own response to it, not in anything in the object itself. We are too apt to think that inspiration or Beauty are sorts of inherent qualities actually contained in

the canvas or pigment, in the block of marble or the printed word. In doing this we are deceiving ourselves. When we say that there is Beauty in a picture what we really mean is, that that particular arrangement of colors and forms causes a state of mind *in us* which is good. We are describing our own feelings and not the painting. It is because of its misleading significance that we have avoided the word Beauty in this discussion. When we use it we think we are talking about something outside ourselves, when we are really talking about something inside, of the particular response that we have made to the work of art in question.

Owing to our customary way of looking at things, this fact is particularly difficult for some people to grasp. Those who experience this difficulty should ask themselves where precisely this mysterious quality of Beauty is located. In the paint? In a musical score? Inside a piano? A little thought will show that it is really easier to think of it as something in ourselves, stimulated and set into motion in a particular way, by an inanimate object which needed our minds to be made alive and interpreted. The better equipped we are for making responses of this kind the more closely will they resemble the original state of mind of the artist, the more fully shall we be able to enjoy the value of the experience of a great mind. To suggest

means for obtaining this equipment is the purpose of the remainder of this book.

WHY ART IS VALUABLE

We may conclude and summarize this chapter by discussing what should have become evident during the last few pages, the reasons *why art is valuable*. It is a question which is always being asked and which devotees of art sometimes find difficult to answer satisfactorily. In an age when wealth and material things have such prominence and such a deep influence on men's minds it is becoming increasingly important to be able to justify art. The Philistines are upon us, and we must have weapons suitable to match against theirs.

We have described art as the communication of a valuable experience, and the artist as a man who, by reason of his superior organization of impulse, has more valuable experiences than other people. We have further seen that, properly approached, a work of art can communicate to others the same state of mind as was enjoyed by its creator. In other words art enables us to achieve that supreme organization that, otherwise, would be forever denied to us. The fact that it does not do this more frequently is due to several factors—unwillingness to make an effort, wrong thinking about art, ignorance of how to approach it, and inability to

distinguish good art from bad. It is a serious thought that such things stand between us and so much that is fine, and valuable, and even essential, in our lives. Science and psychology can explain our thoughts and actions and inhibitions, but art alone can bridge the gulf between one human mind and another, in such a way as to bring the most complex experiences of one to the enjoyment of the other, and act (to use Mr. Richards' phrase) as a "permanent store-house of recorded values." It is hoped that this book may assist in "tapping" that store-house.

CHAPTER III

ON READING POETRY

"I will enchant thine ear."

COMPARATIVELY few people read poetry and a large percentage of those few read the bad variety. They appear to think that because something is written in rhyme and meter, and expresses a smug and commonplace platitude, it is therefore important; which is like supposing that a hen will increase its intelligence if it is decked out in the feathers of a peacock. We shall not be likely to accept so simple and illogical a conclusion. Nevertheless, the fact remains that many intelligent people, including some who enjoy music and pictures, can derive no pleasure from reading poetry, and regard it as being a sort of alien art, or perhaps scarcely as an art at all.

THE APPEAL OF POETRY

Since this is the case, the experiments of Mr. Greening-Lamborn on young English children of high-school age and standing are of great interest.

This country schoolmaster tells us, in his *Rudiments of Criticism*,* that he has succeeded in making his pupils enjoy the work of Tennyson, Keats, Browning, Shakespeare and others, poets who are usually regarded as being the province of the advanced or adult student. He has, moreover, trained the children, all of whom are between the ages of eight and fourteen, to write verse of their own. This verse is not remarkable, save in the sense that it shows that the appreciation of poetry is not confined to the learned and scholarly, but is open to the minds of children. The fact is mentioned in order to dispel any feelings that readers may have that poetry is "beyond them."

What has just been said must not be taken to mean that the full and rich appreciation of all poetry is an easy matter, or that poetry is an exception to the rule that effort is necessary. The very reverse is the case. But there is some poetry, and good work too, that makes its appeal directly to the untrained mind, and can be used as a stepping-stone to the love of a more difficult, and perhaps more valuable, kind.

POETRY AND PROSE

Throughout all this book, in considering each art separately, we shall begin by a discussion of the various limitations that are automatically imposed upon the artist by his particular art. But before

doing this it may be well to say a few words about the essential difference between poetry and prose.

The reader may recollect the examples given to illustrate the meaning of the word Communication in Chapter I, and how, as an experience increases in complication and value, it becomes more and more difficult to communicate. Great experiences are nearly always largely emotional, that is to say, they are chiefly composed of impulses which would be called emotional, rather than of those which would be called intellectual. The discovery that we are in love is primarily emotional; the discovery that insulin can cure diabetes is primarily, though not purely, intellectual. Now these emotional impulses are obviously the more difficult sort to handle and to describe. We can write down in so many words the process by which insulin cures diabetes. They might be difficult words, but they would be clear and understandable. We should find it more difficult to write down in so many words how we fell in love. This is how one man did it:

Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward,
Couched with her arms behind her golden head,
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,
Press her parting lips as her waist I gather slow,
Waking in amazement she could not but embrace
me

Then would she hold me and never let me go?

and another thus:

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;
Present joy hath present laughter,
What's to come is still unsure.
In delay there lies no plenty,
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Let us take this last example and put it into prose, when it would run something as follows:

It may be asked what, exactly, Love is. It is certainly not something to be waited for, and it must be remembered that joy earns its reward of laughter immediately. The future is uncertain. There is no use in delaying, so, since you are sweet, and twenty years of age, give me a kiss. We shan't be young for long.

Now read the poem again. Several things should become noticeable. First, what is actually said is nothing very remarkable. Shakespeare wrote the poem but it did not take a Shakespeare to write the prose. Secondly the poem is clearer in its meaning than the prose, which is cumbersome where the poem is light. Thirdly, something has escaped in the prose that is present in the poem.

If the remarks on the artist in Chapter II have been understood, it should not be difficult to ex-

plain this. An experience is such an individual thing that it can only be communicated in one way. Alter a few words in a poem, change the colors in a picture, or the notes in a piece of music, and the key to that particular experience is destroyed. The prose says roughly the same thing as the verse but no one would dream of regarding it as a happy alternative. If the reader is not completely convinced let him read the two aloud several times and he can hardly fail to see what is meant.

Prose is an admirable vehicle for conveying information, better indeed than poetry. We should hardly care to have the clerks in an information bureau answer our questions in verse. It is also admirable for writing *about* things. But art is not *about* things; it is the direct outcome of an experience, and because poetry is more compact, more of a unity, and more rhythmical, it is a better means for communicating those delicate, subtle and exquisite experiences that are enjoyed by the artist. Once again, an example may help the reader, who should read aloud the following lines and ask himself whether the experience behind them could ever be communicated in any other words. When he has satisfied himself that it could not, he will appreciate the essential difference between poetry and prose. The lines are taken from the famous "Spring" chorus in *Atalanta in Calydon* by A. C. Swinburne.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And, in green underwood and cover,
Blossom by blossom, the spring begins.

WORDS

Reduced, so to speak, to its lowest common denominator, poetry is a collection of words arranged in various ways and combinations. The word is its unit. Words are the units that we use to express everything. When we wish to advertise an automobile we use words. When we wish to make love we use words. Sermons, speeches, scientific treatises, novels, private letters, legal trials—all these widely different functions are composed of the same units—words. Our thoughts, too, are usually unspoken words. Every idea, desire, dislike, sorrow which comes to us is translated, by most of us, into words. Words are the universal means of human communication. This fact is so obvious that people forget to notice it. They seldom think of the effect that it must have upon our reactions to words, and of the limitations, in particular that it must have on the poet.

If a word is shared, say by sermons and advertising, it will rapidly gather to itself associations con-

nected with each. If we are always hearing a word used in one context we shall come to associate it with that use, and be surprised or confused when we hear it used in another. The word "aggressive," for example, is used in the United States as a complimentary adjective to salesmen and baseball-players, while in England it is used to describe people whom you particularly dislike. Thus an Englishman visiting America, on being told that a man was aggressive, would immediately view him as a disagreeable person to be avoided at all costs. This example is sufficient to show that the meaning, and so the value, of a word is not a constant quality, but one which varies from time to time, from place to place, and from individual to individual. Now and again (I hope not often) the reader may find in this book that he cannot make head or tail of what I am talking about. The reason for this, if it occurs, is that what a word means to me is not necessarily the same thing as what it means to him. It would be another example of faulty communication.

This being so the poet is at once hampered and assisted. He is hampered, because every word he uses has already been used by someone else, and may have been degraded, spoiled, restricted to a certain context, or liable to arouse associations in the mind of the reader which are the reverse of what is intended. He is assisted because of the same fact; if

he is a good poet he will make use of the associations of words, and may be able to suggest a whole mass of ideas simply by the use of two or three words. The fact that its unit is so inextricably mixed up with human desires and ideas, that every word is so charged with meaning, is a reason for believing that poetry is the greatest of all the arts. It does not take us away from life but into the middle of it.

There are many aspects of poetry that cannot be entered into here. Different kinds of poetry, the use of rhyme and rhythm, what makes some poetry good and other poetry bad, the importance of blank verse and free verse—all these matters, interesting as they are, are not of first-rate importance. The essential thing to know is how to read poetry so that we can enjoy it and obtain a full response to the poet's experience. We shall first of all consider how this may be done, and then the kind of poetry which is most likely to appeal to the beginner.

READING ALOUD

First and foremost it must be doubly emphasized that, if the reader wishes to respond to poetry, he must cultivate the habit of reading aloud. Neglect of this will make all further effort completely useless. The written word is simply a convenience. Words are sounds and are intended to be spoken. Half the meaning of a poem is lost if it is not *read aloud*, and *read slowly so that each syllable is given*

its full sound-value. Poetry which looks good to the eye will often be found to be flat and commonplace when this test is applied, while if it is not applied, much poetry is almost incomprehensible. The reader should experiment with the following stanza; he will notice how infinitely clearer its meaning becomes when read with the voice and not only with the eye.

Outside it must be winter among men,
For, at the gold bars of the gates again
I heard all night and all the hours of it
The wind's wet wings and fingers drip with rain.

I believe that the teaching of English could be greatly improved if the importance of this was realized. Too often, stress is laid upon the wrong features of poetry. After all, the purpose of a teacher is not, ultimately, to stuff information *about* a poem into his pupils, to explain all the allusions and the origins of all the words, but to help them to love poetry. After they have learnt to do this they may dabble in word-history to their hearts' content, but they must be taught to love poetry first. A poem, read aloud to the class, with not too much expression, but with an emphasis on the rhythm, and with each syllable being given its full value, will mean ten times more than a poem laboriously explained and dissected line by line. It is disquieting to notice that this latter method is

much in favor even at the leading universities which ought to know better.

THE PASSIONATE APPROACH

The habit of reading aloud to oneself, if developed, will do much to avert the mere study of poetry, as if it was simply a mathematical problem, a danger into which many people seem to fall. The approach to poetry must not be that of a prospective buyer at an automobile show, who runs over each point and neglects to think of the car as a whole. It should be made rather with something of the splendid ardor of human passion. When a man falls in love he does not approach his lady with a foot rule in order to ascertain whether her measurements are the same as those of the Venus of Melos. He may compare her lips to ripe cherries and her hair to spun-gold, but it is unlikely that he would think of buying a pound of cherries or an ounce of spun-gold with a view to testing the correctness of his comparisons. Absurd as this sounds it is a fairly accurate description of how some people read poetry. They look at the small individual points, complain about odd rhymes or interrupted rhythms, and forget to think of the poem as a whole, never even paying the poet the compliment of supposing that he may have used the rhyme, or interrupted the rhythm, for a perfectly good reason. It is only by an approach to it which

can best be defined as passionate that poetry can give us all that it has to give. Just as it is true that love, so far from being blind, is perhaps the only thing that can see, so we can only know poetry by loving it.

In this connection, that eminent English critic Mr. I. A. Richards of Cambridge, to whom I am indebted for many of the ideas suggested in this book, has stated, in a recent article, that a poem should be first approached in an analytical way, and that this is more likely eventually to secure the full passionate response that is desired. My personal belief is, that, for the general reader at any rate, this slow, construing approach may destroy interest, or fail to lead to anything further. He would be better advised to secure his first response from the poem, simply as a rhythmical combination of words, realizing, of course, that this is not complete and that he must return to it again and again until none of its subtleties are lost to him. Subsequent study and consideration will increase rather than destroy the value of the first response. Enjoyment of such lines as the following grows larger upon closer acquaintance:

O wild west wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou from whose unseen presence, the leaves dead
Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing.

Yellow and black and pale and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes!

Read them aloud several times and they will become more and more full of meaning.

THE EFFECT OF TIME ON ART

It is sometimes asserted that great art is the same when it is created and a thousand years later. In the sense that a picture by a fourteenth century artist contains the same material now as it did when it was painted, this is true. But, as we have seen, the value of a work of art to us, depends upon our ability to respond to it, and this ability may alter with the passage of years. For an artist is not concerned with ultimate or unalterable truth (if such a thing exists, which is doubtful) but with recording his own experience. Now every artist is bound to give recognition to the ideas and notions of the age in which he is living, and as those ideas become obsolete or discredited his work may become less and less accessible. What may have been a valuable experience in one set of circumstances may lose much of its value when those circumstances are altered. Of course some art is less affected by the passing of time than other, because some ideas remain constant throughout a long period; but with much ancient art, and particularly ancient poetry, we are confined to appreciating the success of the communication rather than the experience behind it. This fact may perhaps account for the mistaken theories of Mr. Clive Bell and

others. A man who did not believe in the existence of God would find it difficult to respond to the poetry of, let us say, John Donne. In order to do so he would have to suspend or set aside all his personal beliefs, a fact noticed by Samuel Coleridge as long ago as 1817. An ability to do this to a certain degree is necessary to the reader of poetry.

PERSONAL BELIEFS

To approach poetry with a firm conviction that our own personal beliefs are the only right ones is automatically to deny ourselves the value of any state of mind of the poet's which is not in accordance with those beliefs. Many religious people are, for this reason, unable to appreciate works of art. The man most capable of enjoying, and benefiting from great poetry is the man who is most capable of understanding, and even temporarily accepting, ideas and beliefs that are not his own. Some extremists are even unable to appreciate the work of a poet simply because they disapprove of his private life. They fail to see that his poetry represents his successes, and that the incidents in his life which shock or disgust them are simply the inevitable failures of a man who is willing to take great risks.

THE MESSAGE OF POETRY

Allied to this common error is that of seeking in poetry what is usually described as a "message."

Rightly approached poetry does, as we have seen, give a message, but too often it is decided beforehand by the reader what the message ought to be. If he cannot find passages, in the course of his deliberate search, which will enable him to say "That is just how I feel" or "How true!" he rejects the poem as having no message to the world. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that such a method is narrow-minded and ignorant in the extreme. The message of art is not always something which can be translated into neat phrases, or framed, and hung above an office table, and to approach poetry simply in order to discover points upon which poet and reader appear to agree is too insolent and contemptible a proceeding to be tolerated.

ANTHOLOGIES

One of the best ways of becoming acquainted with poetry is to obtain a good anthology or collection of poems such as *The Oxford Book of English Verse* or some other similar collection. Such books introduce us to a wide variety of poets and may give an indication of which ones we wish to study in greater abundance. A word of warning should be said about a class of anthology which is becoming increasingly common, in which the poems are divided into sections under such headings as "Love," "Home Sweet Home," "In Exile," etc.

The effect of this practice is to make the reader look at a poem, not as a record of the poet's experience, but as an illustration or contradiction of, say, "Love" under which it is placed, and about which the reader has many ideas of his own. The harm thus done is greater than might at first be supposed. A poem is not written to illustrate a quality selected by the anthologist. It is an intensely personal and individual matter between poet and reader. It is a pity that two such excellent collections as Mr. Robert Bridges' *The Spirit of Man*, and, in a lesser degree, Mr. Walter de la Mare's *Come Hither!*, should be marred by this blemish.

The perfect anthology is, unfortunately, impossible, owing to the laws governing copyright. It would contain no names of authors whatsoever. This would ensure the reader's making his response solely in relation to the poem, and would prevent his judgment being warped, as it often is, by the knowledge that he ought to like it. If we know that a poem is by Shelley, our knowledge that Shelley is a great poet and ought to be admired is apt unduly to influence our opinion of it. A practical application of this no-authors-names plan has been made in the Department of English at the University of Cambridge, England. Poems, minus the names of their authors, are handed to the students who are required to write short criticisms of them, stating whether they consider them good or bad.

Some of the results are more than astonishing. They are appalling. The reader should always be on his guard against making judgments that are based upon irrelevant factors.

THOMAS HARDY

We noticed in the last chapter that a poet is a master of experience, and that he could bring together impulses which appeared to be conflicting and combine opposite ideas in a highly valuable way. How he does this, and precisely what are the ideas he combines are not always easy things to state. I have thought that the following poem may be enlightening in this respect, since the combination of ideas is fairly simple and may give some clue to what is meant by the phrase.

The Ruined Maid

"O 'Melia my dear this does everything crown!
Who could have supposed I should meet you in
town?

And whence such fair garments and prosperity?"

"O didn't you know I'd been ruined?" said she.

"You left us in tatters without shoes or socks,
Tired of digging potatoes and spudding up docks;
And now you've gay bracelets and bright feathers
three?"

"Yes, that's how we dress when we're ruined," said she.

"At home in the barton you said 'thee' and 'thou'
And 'thik oon' and 'theas oon'[†] and 't'other,' but
now

Your talking quite fits 'ee for high company."

"Some polish is gained with one's ruin," said she.

"Your hands were like paws then, your face blue
and bleak,

But now I'm bewitched by your delicate cheek,
And your little gloves fit as on any lady——"

"We never do work when we're ruined," said she.

"You used to call home-life a hag-ridden dream,
And you'd sigh and you'd sock, but at present
you seem

To know not of megrims or melancholy."

"True. One's pretty lively when ruined," said she.

"I wish I had feathers, a fine sweeping gown,
And a delicate face and could strut about town."

"My dear! a raw country-girl such as you be
Cannot quite expect that. You ain't ruined," said
she

In this poem which describes a commonplace but tragic situation in a small English country-town, there are two definite themes—the tragedy of the fallen woman, and the false gaiety with which she surrounds herself, so impressive to the simple-minded rustic girl. The poet has taken a solemn subject and has increased the tragedy of it by writing the poem in a light jig-meter. It is far more tragic with its intolerable, bouncing

[†]West of England dialect, "this one," and "that one."

" . . . Didn't you know I'd been ruined, said she,"

than if it had been written in a slow-moving meter apparently more suitable to the subject.

The author of the poem is Mr. Thomas Hardy better known as a novelist than as a poet, but nevertheless one of the greatest English poets of the last fifty years. His work deals with similar subjects, taken from everyday life and is always worth reading because of the unflinching courage with which the bitterness and tragedy of life are faced. As Mr. Middleton Murry has said, "Mr. Hardy stands high above all other modern poets by the deliberate purity of his responsiveness. The contagion of the world's slow stain has not touched him; from the first he held aloof from the general conspiracy to forget, in which not only those who are professional optimists take a part." This emphasizes the essential greatness of Hardy. His poetry merits a wider public, but there is some cause for suspecting that there are too many cowards in the world, too few who are really sufficiently courageous to look life in its not always agreeable face.

DEVELOPMENT OF VERSE-FORMS

During the long history of poetry there have appeared certain more or less defined forms or *genres* which have been developed and modified by a succession of writers. The earliest form of which we have knowledge is the

EPIC, a long poem written around some heroic character or tremendous event. *The Odyssey* of the Greek poet Homer, written to glorify the adventurous Odysseus (Ulysses) and the Latin *Aeneid* of Vergil, describing the wanderings of Aeneas, founder of Rome, are two ancient examples of the epic. The greatest example in the English language is Milton's *Paradise Lost*, where the subject is the creation and fall of Man. If we except Hardy's Epic-Drama *The Dynasts*, this is the last epic of importance that has been written.

Having affinities with the Epic is the ODE, a shorter poem lacking the Epic's narrative qualities, but addressed to some personage or event, and often in the form of elegiac or memorial verse. Among the best Odes in the language are Henry King's "*Exequy on His Wife*", Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* and *Adonais*, and Swinburne's *Ave atque Vale*.

Allied to, but distinct from the Epic is the NARRATIVE poem, written on a less heroic scale, and concerned primarily with the story rather than some central character or idea. There are many fine examples in English poetry, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, Keats's *Eve of Saint Agnes*, Byron's *Don Juan*, Browning's *Ring and the Book* and Morris's *Fall of the Nibelungs*, to mention only a few. The chief American exponent of the form today is Edwin Arlington Robinson, whose *Lancelot* is perhaps his best work, while of the older poets Longfellow and Lowell may be mentioned.

A form of narrative poetry known as the BALLAD needs special mention. Most of the ballads originated on the Scottish Border and their authors are unknown. They describe in simple and sometimes crude language

the incidents of love and war that occurred when the border was an exciting place in which to live. They often reach magnificent heights of poetry, and attempts to "improve" them during the elegant eighteenth century were marked by absurdity and incongruousness. A number of them may be found in *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, while, for more extensive study, *The Oxford Book of Ballads* may be recommended.

The LYRIC is an indefinite form. The word means a poem written for music, but includes practically all the lighter and shorter poems. It was a form at which the Elizabethan and Caroline poets particularly excelled. Of the countless exquisite lyrics of that period we may mention *When daisies white and violets blue* (Shakespeare), *There is a ladye sweet and kind* (Anonymous), *Cherry-Ripe* (Campion), and *Night piece to Julia* (Herrick). These may be found in any good anthology and all possess that musical quality which is characteristic of the form.

The SONNET is the most restricted of verse forms, being limited to exactly fourteen lines and following a fairly definite rhyme-scheme. There are two main varieties, known usually as the Shakesperian and the Petrarchan. The first consists of three stanzas of four lines each following on an a b a b rhyme-scheme, and concluded with a couplet or two lines with the same rhyme. The form lends itself to the brief exposition of a single idea, with some conclusion or illuminating comment in the final couplet. The following sonnet, which is No. 65 in Shakespeare's collection, shows this well:

- a Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless
 sea,
 b But sad mortality o'ersways their power,

- a How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
 b Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
 c O, how shall Summer's honey breath hold out
 d Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
 c When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
 d Nor gates of steel so strong, but time decays?
 e O fearful meditation! Where, alack,
 f Shall Time's best jewel from Time's quest be
 hid?
 e Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot
 back?
 f Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
 g O, none, unless this miracle have might,
 g That in black ink my love may still shine
 bright.

The Petrarchan sonnet consists of two halves, the first containing eight, and the second six, lines. The first half usually makes a statement or exposition, which is contrasted or compared in the second. The example given below is by Edna St. Vincent Millay:

- a 'Thou are not lovelier than lilacs,—no,
 b Nor honeysuckle; thou art not more fair
 b Than small white single poppies—I can bear
 a Thy beauty; though I bend before thee, though
 a From left to right, not knowing where to go,
 b I turn my troubled eyes, nor here nor there
 b Find any refuge from thee, yet I swear
 a So has it been with mist—with moonlight so.

 c Like him who day by day unto his draught
 d Of delicate poison adds him one drop more
 c Till he may drink unharmed the death of ten,

- c Even so, inured to beauty, who have quaffed
d Each hour more deeply than the hour before,
e I drink—and live—what has destroyed some
men.

The present tendency is to break away from fixed verse forms and to employ a form known as *VERS LIBRE* or free verse, which, by its very looseness requires a fine craftsman to be properly handled. Life has increased in complication and less and less do the old forms seem adequate for the new notions. In any case, the matter is of secondary importance, and only incidental compared to the supreme importance of the poetry itself.

CHAPTER IV

ON LOOKING AT PICTURES

"If you're going to talk pictures I'm off."

—Anonymous.

OF all the people who pass up Fifth Avenue, New York, in a day there can only be an insignificant number who give more than a glance at the Metropolitan Museum of Art at Eighty-second Street, and fewer still who ever enter its doors. If we were to have the temerity to stop one of these millions of passers-by and ask why he never thought of going to look at pictures, he would either reply that he had something better to do, or else think that we meant the movies. Even the few who get inside the museum are not much better off. They see rooms and rooms of paintings, most of which look dull, and, after wandering aimlessly around, from a sense of duty rather than for any other reason, pass out into Fifth Avenue with a sigh of weariness and relief. Possibly the reader has felt something like this, has been discouraged and disappointed, and has resolved that pictures are a secret to which

he does not hold the key. In this chapter we shall try to find a more profitable manner of thinking about pictures, and to suggest a way of visiting museums which may lead to more satisfactory results.

THE THIRD DIMENSION

The limitations of painting are many, but there is one which stands out as being of first importance and which must be fully appreciated by the intending student. This we may call the problem of the Third Dimension. The surface on which a picture is painted, a piece of wood, or canvas, or paper, is two-dimensional. It has length and breadth but no depth. The picture itself, on the other hand, is three-dimensional. That is to say, the objects it contains do not all seem to be at the same distance from our eyes. We look past an object in the front of the picture to something at the back, just as if the latter was really further away from us, instead of being at precisely the same distance on one piece of canvas. In a picture, for example, of New York Harbor taken from Governor's Island we should describe the Battery as being nearer to us than the Woolworth Building, although both would be on the same plane. In other words we look at a picture as if it were real, in the same way that we should look at a genuine landscape. The process by which we do this is known as Imagery and will be found

discussed on pages 93 to 96 in Chapter VI. It is one of those extremely obvious facts that are often overlooked. We realize, in a vague sort of way, that it is so, but often forget it when we are actually looking at a picture.

There are various simple devices by which a painter can suggest the third dimension. He can make one object smaller than another, or less distinct than another. He can introduce objects which by their very nature must be at different distances from the eye. If we see a house and a mountain, the house is more likely to be the nearer of the two, simply because if it was not it would be invisible. But these devices alone do very little, and even where they are used the picture may look flat and lifeless. The suggestion of depth is a more complicated matter than the simple use of perspective. It cannot be reduced to a mathematical formula, since it is achieved in slightly different ways in each individual case. If, when we stand before a picture, we try to analyze the methods by which the artist has achieved depth, we shall profit very little by our trouble. We are concerned not so much with *how* he has done it, but rather with *whether* he has done it at all.

We must look at the picture as if it actually had three dimensions, and, if the artist has done his job badly we shall at once notice something wrong with it. Suppose that it contains the picture of a tree.

The tree may be apparently correct in every detail so much so that we shall say to ourselves: "That is a tree. Trees are solid things. Therefore that tree is solid." The falsity of such a method of reasoning is immediately apparent. We should rather say: "It is obvious that that is meant to be a tree. Does it convey to me the impression of solidity that a real tree would convey?" In the first place we were criticizing nothing at all, and in the second we were criticizing the picture. When we come to the discussion of design we shall see that solidity and depth are not in themselves important, except in their relationship to the whole, as parts of the design.

COLOR

Secondly we must note carefully the questions arising in connection with color. Everyone is aware that certain shades of color harmonize while others do not. Ladies with bright red hair, for instance, are inclined to shun yellow frocks and scarlet hats. Precisely why colors have these effects upon us is something of a mystery, and in the present state of research all we can say is that they do, without being able to give an explanation. Sensitiveness to colors, a feeling for the effects that they produce, is characteristic of the painter. His color-sense is particularly well-developed, though there is no reason to suppose that this cannot be acquired with prac-

tice. He learns how to handle color just as a poet learns how to handle words.

We must again be careful to avoid false arguing. Knowing that certain colors are unfriendly to each other, "clash" as we say, we are very apt to condemn a picture in which this occurs. We should first of all closely examine the picture as a whole, and may then discover that the artist has introduced the "clash" of colors to produce the effect he desires, an action in which he is perfectly justified. There is no hard and fast law about the use of color, which, being nothing more than the medium by which the painter communicates his experience, may be used by him with as much freedom as he desires, to achieve his purpose.

DESIGN

The third limitation that we must mention is again of the obvious variety which, nevertheless, requires emphasis. We are so used to seeing pictures in frames that we forget that the frame is of importance, in the sense that it forms the boundary to the picture. The painter decides on the size of his canvas and has then to do everything in relation to the size and shape he has chosen. He will not arrange the objects which he is painting in a haphazard way about the canvas. The position of each will have a definite relationship to the four sides

of the picture and to all the other objects contained in it. The picture will, in fact, have a three-dimensional design or pattern arising from the arrangement of its parts. This design is the stamp made by the artist, the individuality of the picture. It will be better understood after we have discussed another topic which often puzzles those who stray into exhibitions of modern painting.

REPRESENTATION AND SELECTION

The most frequent objection lodged against "this modern stuff" is that it does not represent things as they are, that it is not true to nature. This is really exceedingly antiquated. Man has spent most of his existence in modifying and controlling nature, in bending it to his purpose, and there does not seem to be any good reason to suppose that art should copy nature any more than anything else. So popular, however, has been the conviction that it *should* do so, that some space must be devoted to dispelling that conviction.

Let us begin by calling imitation of nature, Representation. A good representation will be such that if the picture is shown to someone familiar with the original subject, he will immediately recognize it as being perfectly accurate. It will be much the same as a good color-photograph. If this is the sole object of painting, then it will be rapidly superseded by photography. Yet there is no sign of this

happening. More people are painting than ever before: New York is full of aspiring young painters; which argues that there must be something in painting besides Representation. That something we shall call Selection, to the explanation of which term we can now proceed.

Consider a landscape in nature. It is thrown together without design and looks different according to the position from which we view it. A man at the bottom of the Grand Canyon sees something altogether different from a man at the top. That is obvious. What is less obvious is that two men at the bottom may each see altogether different things. Both have the same objects in front of their eyes viewed from identically the same position, but they may not see the same things. How can this be accounted for? Another common example will be useful.

Suppose that there are two men present at a banquet, of whom one is exceedingly hungry and the other has just had a square meal. The first man will select the food as being the most important feature of the scene. He will ignore the dresses, the flowers on the table, the glitter of the silver. He will see everything in relation to his dominant impulse of the moment—hunger. The second man will tend to minimize the importance of the food, and will select other features as having the most appeal. The appearance of the scene will depend

entirely upon the state of mind of the spectator.

We are now in a position to understand the state of mind of the artist when he sets out to paint a picture. He has to communicate his experience, which is organized or ordered, and he will do this by means of something ordered. (What we meant by Design should now be becoming clearer.) With this end in view he selects from his subject—landscape, still-life or whatever it may be—those features which seem to him the most important, the most relevant to the whole he has in mind. He makes certain changes in size, color, or arrangement, so as to stress what he desires to stress, and to suppress what is irrelevant to his object. As a good artist he will, as we have seen, look at things from an original angle and will perceive unusual and valuable relationships. The result will probably be at first sight incomprehensible. Prolonged study will be necessary before we can meet the demands made upon us, before we can grasp the design of the whole and understand just why the artist has done what he has done.

SUBJECT

What then, precisely, is the connection between the subject of the picture and the picture itself? We may describe the subject as the stimulus which gave rise to the artist's experience. The extent to which he modifies it varies enormously in different

painters. Some modify it so as to make it practically unrecognizable. Such pictures naturally require closer study than those in which the subject is comparatively little altered. Some people, who are either too impatient or too lazy to make the effort necessary for appreciating the first class of picture, have invented a theory that all good art is simple and easily understood by everybody. The Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy was largely responsible for this. As a matter of fact it has not more sense in it than stating that all mathematics which cannot be understood by everybody are bad mathematics. It is usually the case that the greater the art the greater the effort it demands, and the greater reward for that effort it offers.

In the present chapter I have tried to set down in the easiest possible terms the main points of a large and imperfectly understood subject. What I have said would be enormously simplified were it feasible to include illustrations in the text. If I could have placed two pictures side by side, and said to the reader: "One of those contains depth; the other is flat and lifeless. Look at both of them for several minutes each, and see if you notice the difference," both his task and mine would have been considerably easier. There is fortunately a book which offers splendid facilities for doing this, Miss Margaret Bulley's *Art and Counterfeit*.* The reader will find in this, one hundred and eighty-

eight photographs of good and bad art placed side by side, and, with the help of the letter-press, should be able to increase his knowledge and understanding fourfold in a very short space of time. The book is made especially valuable by the fact that no names of artists are attached to the photographs (they may be found in the appendix) and no indication is given of which is meant to be the good example and which the bad. The reader has thus an opportunity for developing his critical faculty and for forming his own opinions instead of taking those of others at second-hand.

The remarks on page 25, which emphasized the importance of thinking of a work of art as an experience, a state of mind, have special reference to the study of painting. It is fatally easy to look at a picture as if it was something in itself and to forget that it is simply the key to an experience, the link between the artist's mind and our own. What we see, that is, what is reflected on the retina of our eye, is important only because it sets up in us a complicated series of reactions, which, if we are perfectly equipped, will correspond to the experience of the artist. By the value of those reactions, and by that only, should we judge the picture.

DRAWING

In order not to complicate this chapter more than was necessary, the discussion has been strictly

confined to painting, and no mention has been made of the kindred arts of drawing and etching which, by their absence of color, need separate consideration. When he has digested and assimilated what has been said, the reader should find little difficulty in adapting the main argument to these other forms of art. He will see that certain modifications are necessary, and that the place of color is taken by the contrast of light and shade. An opportunity is thus offered for doing some individual thinking with the material that has already been supplied. It is not until people begin to think about what they read that reading does them the slightest good.

VISITING A MUSEUM

Let us now return to the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Those who have no chance of visiting this, may obtain postcard photographs of all the pictures at five cents apiece and colored reproductions of any of them at prices between five cents and fifty cents. It may be worth while to mention that the Museum publishes pamphlets containing lists, with prices, of all reproductions on sale, and of the various catalogs and publications issued. Those who live in or near New York need not do this. With a minimum of trouble they can see the pictures themselves. If they are a little fatigued by much thinking they can begin by visiting the Rodin gallery and looking at Rodin's statue, *The*

Thinker. They may be encouraged to see, from its expression, that other people have found the process of thinking a difficult one.

There are so many good pictures in the museum that to point out one or two may seem invidious. But, because they are of the highest quality, because they are by one of the greatest artists of modern times, and because they illustrate many of the points brought up in this chapter, I would recommend for special attention two paintings by the French artist, Paul Cézanne. These are located on Floor II, Room 21, and bear the titles of *La Colline des Pauvres* and *Le Château noir* respectively. The catalog number of the first is c.3321, while, at the time of writing, the second is uncataloged.

Neither of these pictures is particularly striking at first glance. They appear to the casual observer, who looks at them for fifteen seconds or less, as rather uninteresting landscapes rather badly painted. Prolonged study, and repeated study is necessary before their design begins to become clear, and they gradually assume the appearance of an ordered, three-dimensional whole. Cézanne's power of suggesting depth is unequalled, although he has many imitators who try, and fail, to discover the secret. In the case of *Le Château noir* the student may find that if he fixes his attention upon the building in the center of the painting, he will perceive the de-

sign more easily; but this is largely a matter of personal taste. Some find it helpful, while to others it appears useless. In any case careful inspection is necessary, and several visits may have to be made before any response is secured. If, however, the final result is satisfactory, the student will have gone a long way towards understanding how pictures should be looked at. He will, moreover, have the satisfaction of having done it for himself.

The usual method of visiting a picture gallery is not to be recommended. It consists in wandering from room to room looking at everything and seeing nothing. I have seen it practised in the Metropolitan Museum, in the National Gallery in London, in the Louvre in Paris, in the Uffizi in Florence, and I have also seen the boredom writ large on the faces of those who do it. It is due to the vice of thinking quantity important, and forgetting that the question: "How many?" is usually a sign of unintelligence. It is better to select a few pictures for careful study, and it will be found that, with practice, the response comes more quickly. Moreover, familiarity with the work of one artist, and a knowledge of his style and mannerisms will be of the greatest assistance in quickening the critical faculty, while to know something of his background and of his contemporaries will add to the interest and widen the powers of appreciation.

DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN PAINTING

The reader may be assisted in his study of European painting by the following brief outline of its development from the fourteenth century to the present day. Its origins were in Italy, and it must always be remembered, in studying Italian painting, that it was a period of experimentation in methods of depicting light, depth and movement, and of transition from the purely architectural forms of the Primitives. The first sign of new life came in the fourteenth century with Giotto, and the whole of the ensuing epoch was one of discovery and innovation, until its climax, two hundred years later, with Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. The two chief fourteenth-century schools were at Florence and Siena. The Sienese, of whom Duccio and Simone Martini were the most important, showed very little third dimensional skill, while the Florentines, of whom Giotto was the greatest, made distinct advances in this respect. Giotto's frescoes in the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi are remarkably third-dimensional for such early work.

The fifteenth century produced four great schools, the Florentine, the Umbrian, the North Italian, and the Venetian. The Florentine, of which Luca Signorelli and Piero della Francesca were the forerunners, was the most powerful, and the school is distinguished by the great names of Fra Angelico, Fra Lippo Lippi, Ucello, Baldovinetti and, greatest of all, Sandro Botticelli. Among the paintings of the last may be mentioned *Spring*, and *The Birth of Venus* in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, the *Raczynski Madonna* in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, and *Mars and Venus* in the National Gallery, London. The Umbrian School, which was an offshoot of the Florentine, had for its foremost artists Perugino

(works in Room XII of the Pinacoteca at Perugia, and elsewhere) and Pinturicchio, who is best known for his superb Piccolomini frescoes in the Cathedral Library at Siena. The school reached its culmination in the sixteenth century with Rafael, a religious painter, whose *Madonna* in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, Rome, is justly famous. The North Italian School (*e. g.* Mantegna) was deeply influenced by the great Venetians, who were remarkable for their use of color. Giovanni Bellini, Giorgione, Veronese, Titian and Tintoretto were the chief Venetian painters. The works of all of them may be studied in the Palazzo Dogale at Venice, and in the National Gallery in London.

The sixteenth century saw the magnificent climax of the Florentine School in Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. The former is best known for his *Last Supper* at Milan and for the *Mona Lisa* in the Louvre, Paris, and the latter for his frescoes in the Sistine Chapel.

In Spain the Italian influence was strong, though flavored by somewhat florid native characteristics. The best artists were Velasquez, Murillo and El Greco, in the sixteenth century, and, later, Goya.

Meanwhile a great movement had begun in the north. In the fifteenth century the brothers Van Dyck, in the Netherlands, had discovered the art of oil-painting, and founded the Flemish School, influencing also the painting of Germany. Other names of the school are Van der Goes, Van der Weyden, Memlinc and Breugel. When, in the late sixteenth century, Italian greatness was declining, it was the Netherlands which became the center of European painting. Rubens, Van Dyck and a Frenchman, Claude Lorrain, were chiefly responsible for this. Allied to, but distinct from the Flemish School, was the Dutch group of painters, among which the old

Italian influence was less marked, and of whom Rembrandt and Franz Hals were the greatest. The school is particularly famous for its house-interiors by Pieter de Hooch and Johannes Vermeer, and for the wild, eerie landscapes of Jacob van Ruisdael. Ruisdael's pupil Hobbema achieved one superb piece of work in his *Avenue at Middlebarnis*, now in the National Gallery, London. Aelbert Cuyp should also be mentioned for his marvellous treatment of sunlight. The three great German masters of the sixteenth century were Dürer, Cranach and Holbein.

In the eighteenth century the chief schools of painting were in France and England. The French School consisted of Fragonard and Watteau, whose work was elegant and fanciful, reflecting the gay and artificial life of the court of Louis XV, and of the moralists, Greuze and Chardin. The greatest of the English School was William Hogarth, who combined representation with design in a manner never since surpassed. The others were portrait-painters, Gainsborough, Reynolds, Hoppner, Romney and Raeburn, all more or less influenced by Rubens, and influencing in their turn the American Colonial painters, Copley and Stuart.

At the end of the century two English landscape artists, John Crome and John Constable, developed the Ruisdael tradition and kept painting alive during the chaotic years of the French Revolution, which temporarily stifled art in that country. But by 1830 the Barbizon School, of whom Corot, with his soft misty landscapes, and the somewhat sentimental Millet, were the most important, was flourishing in France.

This movement was followed by Neo-Classicism, or an attempt to copy the Greek and Roman traditions.

It was of comparative unimportance, save for the great Ingres, who was received with as much disgust by his contemporaries as Mr. Epstein today. The inevitable Romantic reaction was headed by Delacroix and Géricault in France, and by the colorist Turner in England.

At the turn of the nineteenth century France was full of various schools, each working on its own pet theory, and towards 1870 an influential movement was born which was known as Impressionism. Its aim was to present a total impression rather than a detailed representation, and its chief exponents were Manet, Monet, Degas and Renoir, the last being by far the most important. He solved the problem of the Third Dimension where Monet had failed or not tried to solve it, and showed the way for the next movement, Post-Impressionism.

The greatest of the Post-Impressionists was Paul Cézanne. He saw that pure Impressionism was simply a theory and was in danger of applying a formula to the creation of art where no formula could be properly applied. He brought back into painting that intense emotional quality that had been lacking in Impressionism, and has exercised a greater influence on modern European and American art than any other artist.

Outside France the only important movement was Pre-Raphaelitism led by the English painters D. G. Rossetti and Burne-Jones, who tried to return to the unsophisticated style that had preceded Raphael. Like other imitative movements it produced little of value or interest, and was opposed with vigor and success by John McNeil Whistler, an Anglicized American, who was the chief apostle of Impressionism in England.

The above outline lays stress only on the chief names

and deals only with the most important schools, and with those that are most likely to come to the notice of the intending student. It may serve as a preliminary guide to a very large subject, and as an aid to placing in relationship to each other hitherto undefined movements.

CHAPTER V

ON LOOKING AT ARCHITECTURE

"Larger than Westminster Abbey."

THE study of architecture involves the least possible trouble and expense on the part of the student, for he has neither a gallery nor a concert-hall which he must visit. It is everywhere accessible. A walk through Jersey City or Trenton, New Jersey, gives excellent opportunities for studying bad architecture and deciding just why it is bad, and this is made all the more interesting because here and there, amid those drab, dull, depressing acres of houses, there are a few that are beautiful, like oases in a desert. A walk in New York or Chicago is full of interest for the student of architecture, so long as he realizes that antiquity has no essential connection with good art.

ECONOMIC LIMITATIONS

Of all the arts architecture is the most influenced by economic conditions, that is to say by factors which are not primarily connected with art. It

will be well first of all to consider these factors, although they may be somewhat obvious, since a realization of them is essential to the understanding and appreciation of our subject.

The architect has, first, to design his building with reference to his site. A building has to be designed with reference to the amount of ground space available. Secondly, the purpose of the building must be considered. Obviously if it is to contain offices it is of no use to design it like a cathedral. It has to contain a certain number of rooms, each with so many corridors and with the necessary communications between each. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that the construction of the University of Pittsburgh made it necessary to alter the whole system of the education there, an example of Architecture influencing its purpose, instead of, as is usually the case, the purpose influencing the architecture. Thirdly, the architect has to consider the other buildings in proximity to his own. He may desire to compete with them, that is to say, make his own building stand out prominently and dominate everything else around it. The designer of the projected Larkin tower in New York has evidently had this object in view. By constructing a tower which is to be the highest in the world he is endeavoring to dwarf his neighbors and to draw attention away from them to his own work. Or again, he may

wish to make his building harmonize with the rest. If its neighbors are in the gothic style (pointed arches) he will not design his building in classical style (square arches). If, for example, he has been commissioned to add a dormitory to a university built entirely in the Colonial manner, he will endeavor to make the new harmonize with the old. Those who are familiar with the University of Harvard, where the Colonial style predominates, will recall that the Widener Library has been built in massive classical style. In my own opinion this building, good as it is in itself, fails, simply because it is out of proportion and harmony with those that surround it. Again the architect may wish to avoid competition with some near-by building. Visitors to Washington may have noticed, directly to the left of the Lincoln Memorial, the Institute of Scientific Research. It is clear that the architect of the latter wished to avoid anything like competition with the Memorial which is rightly intended to dominate the scene. With this in view he has made his building comparatively inconspicuous and has, incidentally, produced one of the best pieces of work in the country in doing so. Fifthly the architect has got to take into consideration the climatic conditions of his site. Failure to do this may result, not only in an unpleasing appearance, but also in actual disaster. The architect of the Houses of Parliament in London used a porous stone which

was quite unfitted to withstand the damp English climate. The result has been that the stone is crumbling away and the problem of keeping the building intact is becoming more and more acute. Lastly, he has got to bear in mind the amount of money which he is allowed to expend. He may be given a free hand, but this is an unlikely contingency and it is more probable that he will be limited to a particular sum, and that he will have to make his building with direct reference to this.

It will be clear, from a reading of the foregoing summary of the limitations imposed upon an architect, that his task is far from easy. If he is a good artist he will wish to produce an artistically good piece of work, and, at the same time, he has to effect a reconciliation, as it were, between the demands of good art and the demands of economics. We can best understand how he may meet this problem if we consider very briefly some of the different kinds of architecture.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

The earliest type of building erected by man was, no doubt, domestic. As soon as he ceased to be an animal he began to build himself a house. The kind of house that he built was simple in the extreme and not one which would meet with much favor at the present time. Nowadays, with our overpopulated cities, the main requirement of a

house is that it should be erected in the shortest possible time and should contain the necessary comforts of life. Its appearance is a minor consideration, or not a consideration at all. The domestic architect is so limited by economic conditions that he has to neglect all other factors. In Colonial days, when people led more leisurely lives and had time to consider other things besides the acquisition of wealth, attention was paid to the design of a house as well as to its comforts. Those who have been to Mount Vernon, Virginia, will not have failed to have noticed that its designer was concerned with something else besides mere utility, and with making it as much in harmony with its surroundings as he was able.

ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE

Next to domestic architecture in order of time came religious or ecclesiastical architecture. Very early in his history man began to worship something. The fact that the sun gave him warmth and light, and the fruits of the earth, caused him to regard it as a God, and he built temples dedicated to the sun-God. The earliest of these were simply circles of stones such as may be seen at Stonehenge in England and in parts of Brittany, France. As man increased in knowledge these temples became more ornate and, built as they were with the sole purpose of glorifying the gods, were influenced

very little by economic considerations and almost wholly by a desire to build the most beautiful temple that was possible. During the Middle Ages (a loose term covering a period of about five hundred years from 1000 A.D. to 1500 A.D.) before the advent of printing, most of the artistic energy of man was expended in ecclesiastical architecture. It is not unusual to find, in England, an immense cathedral capable of seating five thousand people, built in a spot where the population could only have been a few hundreds. Ely Cathedral, which dominates the flat fens of Cambridgeshire, is an example of this. A practical-minded visitor recently enquired of the Sacristan why they built such a huge church for so diminutive a town; to which the Sacristan replied with perfect truth, that they built it to the glory of God. In modern times people still build churches, but whether because they have insufficient money, whether because they have forgotten about the glory of God, or whether because they think that God requires no glorifying, they build less beautiful churches and more tin tabernacles and other unpleasing edifices.

That the decay of ecclesiastical architecture may be traced to the invention of printing, is suggested in Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*. The first printing-press in France was erected close to the

doors of the great cathedral, and Hugo imagines two spectators standing in the square before the building. One of them points first towards the new printing-house and then to the cathedral and remarks: *Ceci tuera cela*. (This will kill that.), meaning that henceforward men would spend their time writing books instead of building cathedrals. Although it is unlikely that anyone would have possessed such remarkable prophetic powers as Hugo pictures, there is a good deal of truth in the idea. Scientific discoveries have a far-reaching influence, though it often takes time before this is noticed. Another reason for the decay of church-building is undoubtedly that we have, today, lost the simple, unquestioning faith of the Middle Ages. We no longer build churches from burning conviction. Many of our convictions are simply conventions in disguise, and as we saw in Chapter One, conventions do not produce great art.

BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE

Within the last hundred years a new type of building has become necessary. Industry has grown like a mushroom in the night, and architects are faced with the problem of reconciling its demands with those of good art. Economic considerations are enormously important. The necessity of getting a large building into a little space, the neces-

sity of making it suitable for modern business methods, the necessity of not obstructing the passage of light to other buildings—all these factors have to be considered. It is cheering to see that they have not made modern architects lose sight of the requirements of fine architecture. America has evolved a style which is unique and which has many unexplored possibilities. Standing on the Jersey shore you may look across at the Telephone Building and see one of the best pieces of modern architecture in the world. Out of the prosaic requirements of an office building the architect has produced something which, for harmony of design, can hold its place with the splendid palaces of Venice and Paris.

DESIGN AND DECORATION

Bearing in mind what has been said we are now in a position to consider the factors that should influence our judgment of a building. First and foremost we must look at its design. In our discussion of painting we saw that the artist's object was to achieve an ordered and coherent whole, and to make each portion of his picture relevant to that whole. Exactly the same thing is true of the architect. He has got to achieve, not a mass of detail, beautiful in itself, but a co-ordination of the many into the one. His ornamentation must have a relation to his main design and must not be there

simply as ornamentation. It is astonishing how many architects fail to achieve this result. They plaster their work with meaningless turrets and pinnacles which suggest an expensive wedding-cake rather than a building. This fault was particularly common in Gothic architecture and is admirably illustrated by the cathedral at Milan in Italy. The same kind of thing may be noticed in a certain hotel at Atlantic City where an original design, full of possibilities, has been utterly ruined by the addition of meaningless decorations which do not contribute to the building in any way whatsoever.

It must not be thought that the above remarks are meant to imply that decoration is always a bad feature. In many cases it is an essential part of the design, as in the best English Gothic (Lincoln Cathedral for instance) and in the highly ornate style known as Byzantine, of which the Cathedral of St. Mark at Venice is one of the finest examples. The kind of decoration against which I am inveighing is that which is unessential to the main design, and therefore meaningless. The point may be made clearer by reference to something else. A man making an automobile might decorate it in many ways, but he would not hang strings of sausages from the wheels, unless, of course, he wished to advertise sausages, in which case he would be entirely justified. *Every part must be relevant to the whole.*

PROPORTION

An important branch of the question of design is Proportion. It is not easy to reduce Proportion to mathematical terms, as it is largely a relative question. The Proportion of a building will depend upon its position and many other factors which it is impossible to mention here. Proportion, however, is something which everyone understands even though, with our present slight knowledge of psychology, we cannot explain it. Once again examples will be of service. The proportions of the Lincoln Memorial at Washington are perfect. That is to say that in looking at it we are not conscious that any part of the whole is unduly emphasized or under-emphasized. Each part seems to belong perfectly to the main design. The proportions of the Capitol on the other hand, are far from satisfactory. In its original uncompleted form the dome must have looked exceedingly top-heavy and even now it does not seem to be in proper relationship to the rest. In this connection it is worth while to digress for a space and consider certain factors which may warp or wrongly influence our judgment.

WRONG SORT OF JUDGMENT

A loyal American looking at the Capitol may not see it as a work of art at all. He may experience

a glow of pride in his country and in her freedom from the oppressor. An opponent of Republican government may view it with dislike as being the seat of activities of which he disapproves. A director of a wrecking company may look at it simply as an admirable building to pull down. The owner of an adjacent house may regard it as being a nuisance because it keeps the light out of his bedroom. Such considerations are, of course, entirely irrelevant to the building as a work of art. They are much commoner than is usually supposed and it is important to distinguish them from those which were mentioned above and which are to be entertained.

THE QUESTION OF QUANTITY

We must also beware of admiring a thing simply because it is large. Size undoubtedly is impressive. We are more apt to look at an elephant than at a mouse, but this does not necessarily mean that the elephant is better, or more interesting, or more beautiful. The tendency to think in terms of quantity instead of in terms of quality is becoming more and more pronounced. How frequently are we told that a man possesses so many million dollars, information which is not of the slightest interest. What matters is how he obtained them and the use that he makes of them. In the programs of the Metropolitan Opera Company we read, among the

other advertisements, the names of those who are sufficiently wealthy to possess boxes. On the back of a photo-card of the projected national cathedral at Washington I recently read: "In five years one of the finest cathedrals in the world, *larger* than Westminster Abbey, will rise above the city, *higher* than the Washington monument." (The italics are mine.) Mention of the new chapel at Princeton University invariably calls forth a statement that it is the second *largest* college chapel in the world, with a foot-note as to the cost. We are frequently told that America gives a college education to a larger percentage of her population than any other country in the world, but the quality of that education is seldom discussed, except by visitors from Europe who are astonished and appalled. Quantity by itself is of no merit.

WINDOW-SPACING

Returning now to the question of Proportion we must notice that particular branch of it known as window-spacing. A window is the first necessity of every room, and the position and arrangement of the windows, as viewed from the exterior, is consequently an important feature of the design. In certain old English houses the windows were placed at random, without reference to the design. The result is quaint and charming but appeals to our sentiment and historic sense rather than to any

more valuable and extensive group of impulses. In the majority of buildings the windows are placed so as to form a simple and easily appreciable pattern. In looking at a building we should notice how they are spaced, and whether they seem to be a part of the whole supporting the design of the whole, or simply gaps in the wall producing a jarring and inharmonious effect. The Skyscraper style offers splendid opportunities for observing the part played by window-spacing in the design of a building.

In Architecture as in everything else, the acuteness of our judgment depends upon the width of our knowledge. The more comparisons that we are able to make the more qualified are we to speak. The value of travel lies in this. A man who has only seen one woman may suppose her to be the most beautiful woman in the world, but his judgment would be of little value, although it is just conceivable that it would be correct. In the same way were it possible to take a man who had never seen any other building and place him before the Ducal Palace in Venice, he might say that it was the most beautiful building in the world. It is conceivable that he might be correct in so saying, but he would hardly be in a position to judge. This brings us to the question of imitation which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Nine. Those who admire the Cathedral of St. John the Divine at One hundred and tenth Street, New York,

are probably those who have not seen the European cathedrals from which it was copied. Those familiar with them, on the other hand, are apt to feel that it is regrettable that a building should not have been erected which was more unique and more essentially native. Gothic architecture was the expression of people whose ideas and feelings and desires were very different from our own, and to go on reproducing it is a second-hand sort of business and not in accordance with the definition of good art that we made above.

CONCLUSION

It is not perhaps easy to see how a building can be the communication of an experience. Surrounded as it is by its strictly utilitarian associations, it is difficult to view it as a state of mind. We have got to remember that when we say a building is harmonious we are, in reality, describing a state of mind produced by it in ourselves that we loosely designate as Harmony; that when we say it is massive we are talking about our own response. For the sake of simplicity it is convenient to talk as if these qualities were actually attached to the building itself but it is essential to realize the fallacy of this. Some readers may find this realization exceedingly difficult. Such are advised to think first of poetry where there is not so much difficulty, then of painting where the difficulty is rather

greater, and finally of architecture. Advancing step by step in this way they may come to understand that the balance of masses and the way that they fit into the main design is the key to a human experience, which, with practice, they may learn how to use.

DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

The following is an outline of the development of the chief styles of architecture which the reader is likely to meet.

PRE-CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE

Egyptian (c. 2980 B. C. to 525 B. C.) was deeply influenced by Egypt's religious beliefs (life after death, etc.) and by its dry, fixed climate. Only tombs and temples were built for permanency. Their roofs were flat and supported by elaborately carved and colored columns (e. g. Luxor or Karnak).

Mesopotamian (c. 3000-538 B. C.). Clay used for building and first appearance of the arch. Palaces were more important than temples. They were built on platforms and planned about a series of courts (e. g. Palace of Sargon at Khorsabad). A form of temple was the ziggurat, a high, staged tower at the top of which the god was believed to dwell.

Prehistoric Greek (to 1100 B. C., in the Ægean Islands). The column, carrying a horizontal beam, or lintel, was usually employed. Fortified palaces were the most important monuments.

Dark Ages (1100-700 B. C.). Dorian invasions. No new developments.

GREEK CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE (after 700 B. C.)

reached its height in Athens in the fifth century B. C. It is characterized by the absence of the arch, doorways, etc., being formed by columns supporting a lintel. The temple, constructed of marble, was the most important type of building (e.g. The Parthenon, Athens). The ideals of the Greek architect were symmetry, unity and refinement, but after the conquests of Alexander (334-323) and with the fusing of Roman and Greek influences, classical architecture lost much of its purity of design.

ROMAN CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE (27 B.C.-330 A.D.) exhibited strong Greek influence, but employed more complex forms. It used concrete and re-introduced the arch, adding great vaults, thus achieving new interior spatial effects. (e.g. The Pantheon, Rome).

MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE may be said to include all the styles developed from the time of the triumph of the church with the conversion of Constantine in 313 A.D. until the Renaissance in the fifteenth century. Ecclesiastical architecture dominates. These medieval styles are as follows:

Early Christian (the Christian architecture of the West, until about 1000) answers directly the needs of the church service. The chief development is the basilica—a rectangular, flat-roofed church (e.g. San Lorenzo, Rome).

Byzantine (Christian architecture of the East) develops vault construction and especially the dome. In the sixth century the domed basilica is the most popular form (e.g. Santa Sophia, Constantinople), but from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries the Greek cross supplants it, the ground floor being square, with the arms of the cross marked out in the second story by four small domes and a larger central one. Gorgeous and

highly-colored decoration. Strong Byzantine influence is often seen in the West (e.g. San Marco, Venice).

Romanesque (Western architecture c. 1000-1150) is characterized by the use of the round arch, by its dignity and heaviness, the predominance of wall surface over windows, and general horizontal accent. In central and southern France it is more classical in feeling (e.g. St. Trophimes at Arles), but further north, in Normandy and the Ile de France, it showed tendencies which later developed into the Gothic. English Romanesque architecture is very close to Norman, but more massive (e.g. the naves at Gloucester and Ely). Spain is more dependent upon southern France (e.g. Santiago at Compostella). German Romanesque is more complex in plan.

Gothic (c. 1150-1550) is the logical culmination of Romanesque, differing from it in using pointed arches and by its greater height, grace and lightness, its more naturalistic ornamentation and its marked accent on the vertical. It received its greatest development in France (e.g. Chartres, Amiens, Notre Dame de Paris), and the French influence was strongly felt in Germany, Italy and Spain. In England three styles developed: Early English—(thirteenth century) extreme simplicity and restraint (e.g. Salisbury); Decorated Style—fourteenth century) profusion of ornament (e.g. parts of Lincoln); Perpendicular—(fifteenth century) accent on perpendicular; very elaborated vaulting (e.g. King's College Chapel at Cambridge).

The Decorated Style has its counterpart in France and elsewhere, in the Flamboyant Style, marked by greater slenderness and increased decoration, windows, spires, etc. (e.g. St. Ouen at Rouen).

THE RENAISSANCE, or classical revival, began in the

fifteenth century in Italy, where there was the richest heritage of antiquities. The chief difference between Medieval and Renaissance architecture is that the former concerns itself chiefly with structural problems, while the latter is more interested in pure form. Roman forms (the round arch) and classical details were adopted. In this period, the personality of individual architects becomes important, and palaces and churches share their interest. Initiated by Brunelleschi in Florence, the Renaissance centers during the fifteenth century in this city, moving in the sixteenth to Rome. This period is known as the High Renaissance. Among the famous Italian architects, the names of Alberti, Bramante (designer of St. Peter's, Rome), Peruzzi, Palladio and Sansovino may be mentioned.

In France the Renaissance came one hundred years later than in Italy, at first manifesting itself only in detail. The influence of the Roman school reached France towards the end of the sixteenth century. The Louvre in Paris is a monument of the French Renaissance.

In England, Gothic architecture persisted longer than anywhere else. What was the High Renaissance in England was Post-Renaissance in the rest of Europe. The Renaissance in England was inaugurated by Inigo Jones (e.g. Banqueting Hall, Whitehall, London) and received fresh impulse from Christopher Wren (died 1723), the architect of St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

At the end of the sixteenth, and beginning of the seventeenth century a new tendency manifested itself in Italy—the so called *Baroque* style, which aimed at freeing itself from the fetters of academicism (that is, adherence to classical rules). It was first championed by Michelangelo (e.g. The Dome of St. Peter's, Rome, and the Capitoline group), then taken up by Palladio,

and finally reached its full triumph under Bernini.

In France, the Baroque style reigned supreme until the time of Louis XIV (1643-1715), when a strict academicism took its place, only to be replaced once more by the freer, more ornate style of Louis XV, known as *Rococo*. With the reign of Louis XVI, however, academicism achieved a long-enduring victory.

During the Napoleonic period, Greek or, more frequently, Roman, models were almost universally followed (e.g. Arc de l'Étoile, Paris). This severe classicism was followed by the inevitable Romantic reaction, which manifested itself in a return to the Gothic and began, as in literature, in England. There the Gothic movement received two great impulses in the building of the Gothic Houses of Parliament (1840-60) and in the writings of Ruskin. In France, however, it was not as strong. Germany reverted not only to Gothic, but also to Romanesque forms.

With the increase of historical knowledge in the nineteenth century a general diffusion of styles took place. From imitating Romanesque and Gothic forms, architects turned to emulating the work of the Renaissance and even their own Baroque and Rococo styles. For public monuments, classic forms still remained the favorites. At the same time, a new theory of functionalism—that is, that the structural demands and the use of a building should determine its style—took ever firmer hold, resulting in the forms with which we are familiar today—modernistic forms and the skyscraper.

In America *The Colonial Style* (to 1776) took English, Dutch, French or Spanish form, according to the section of the country. After the founding of the Republic, the course of American architecture is similar to that of Europe.

CHAPTER VI

ON LOOKING AT SCULPTURE

"They have hands and handle not."—Psalm 115

So much of what has been said in relation to the arts of painting and architecture is also applicable to that of sculpture, that this chapter will be shorter than the rest. There are, however, certain special features of sculpture which need emphasis, and which make the necessity of looking at it in a particular way very marked.

LIMITATIONS OF THE SCULPTOR

We must first of all consider the limitations automatically imposed upon the sculptor by the medium that he employs. To begin with, he is exceptionally limited in his choice of subject. He cannot, like the painter, depict or suggest large spaces. The painter, in an area of a few square inches can present a scene covering, in reality, many square miles. A postcard is sufficient to contain a view of New York from Staten Island. The sculptor, on the other hand, cannot deal with land-

scape, or only to an insignificant degree. The most complex thing he can represent is a group of people, and, to all intents and purposes the largest thing he can represent is a horse. He can, of course, make the horse much larger than life but he cannot deal with subjects actually occupying a much larger space. This fact causes the majority of sculptors to focus their entire attention on the representation, in one form or another, of the human figure, and we shall be justified if we neglect other sorts of sculpture and confine our discussion to this one type. It will at once be apparent that this results in Representation—a term explained in Chapter IV—having an important place in the art of sculpture. So much is this so that we often resent a statue being anything else but purely representational, departing in any way from the orthodox reproduction of the human body. We ought to remember that mere representation, as in painting, is not art, and a statue, like a picture, a poem, or a building, is the record of an artist's experience. Because his experience has led him to adopt a form of communication that does not happen to tally with our ideas of what a woman's body should look like, we have no right to condemn it, any more than we have a right to condemn anything on the grounds that we don't understand it.

In the matter of color the sculptor has, obviously, less scope than the painter. It is true that in the

Middle Ages, and at other periods, painted wooden statues were common, and that there is, at present, a revival in this form of art. But the majority of sculptors occupy themselves with bronze, or marble, or plaster, in which color is reduced simply to variation of tone. We shall not be stretching the truth if we say that the sculptor has to communicate his experience almost entirely by means of shape or form. In this he has an advantage over the painter. We have seen that the latter has to suggest something that has three dimensions on a surface that possesses only two; but the sculptor is dealing with something solid that has three dimensions already. We shall see, when we come to discuss Imagery, how this affects our way of looking at a statue.

POSITION AND LIGHT

Our first consideration, when we find ourselves before a piece of sculpture, is the position that it occupies. In the case of a picture, provided it is hung in good daylight and on a background that does not clash with any of its colors, the position is of comparatively small importance. The light of a picture is contained in it; it is a part of the painting. The light of a statue, on the contrary, is given to it by the actual light in which it is placed. Alter the lighting effect upon a statue and you alter all its shadows and high-lights, and thus, its entire

appearance. Just as some people look better in certain lights, so statues look better in the kind of light for which they were intended. A statue which was designed by its creator for a position out of doors, let us say in the bright sunlight of Greece, loses much of its effect when removed to the dim radiance of a museum corridor, a fact overlooked by many museum-directors, and one which should be taken into account by any spectator. Equally, a statue designed to occupy a lofty position, so that it must be looked up to, may lose all its meaning when it is removed to the level of our own eyes. To take a rather extreme example, the *Statue of Liberty* in New York Harbor would lose much of its splendor were it to be laid on its back.

ANGLES OF PERCEPTION

Our next consideration is of the greatest importance, and is one more of those which are so obvious that they often pass unnoticed. A picture is meant to be looked at from in front. No one but a lunatic would look at it from behind. Except in special cases a statue is meant to be looked at from all sides. As we alter our position the appearance of the statue changes. Certain features become less pronounced and are lost to view, others increase in prominence. From each new viewpoint we see a new aspect of the design, and our response is modified and enriched each time we move to a fresh

position. Unless we are careful to secure this full, complex response we may be totally unable to understand what the sculptor is driving at. A glance at a statue tells us even less than a glance at a picture. Of course some statues are deliberately designed to be looked at from a restricted number of positions. Reliefs are an obvious example. Another is mentioned in the next paragraph.

SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

Statues are frequently found in close relationship to buildings, occupying niches in walls, or, sometimes, acting as pillars, in which latter case they are technically described as "caryatids." In such a case we must notice how the building and the statue influence each other. The building forms a background and acts in the same way to the statue as a frame acts to a picture. The statue, being something to which the eye is naturally attracted, may be used to emphasize certain points of the building, and, by noticing carefully the positions of the former we can often better appreciate the design of the latter. This is particularly true of ecclesiastical or church architecture. Again, an architect may wish to break up, or interrupt, a straight piece of skyline-roof, and, in order to do so, may place statues at intervals along it. Such statues, forming silhouettes, would, of course, be designed with direct

reference to their position; and would be meaningless anywhere else.

MATERIAL

Having given consideration to the position of a piece of sculpture, we should next notice the material of which it is constructed. This will, in most cases, be one of three—marble, bronze, and plaster, each of which has its own peculiar characteristics. Marble is white and smooth, giving an impression of hardness; bronze, dark and with many gradations of tone; plaster, rough and rugged. The sculptor's choice of material will depend upon his subject and the kind of things that he desires to emphasize. In our criticism of his work we must decide how well he made use of the characteristics of the material he has chosen. If the reader will think of any statue with which he is familiar, and consider what it would look like in another material, he will understand how important that material is.

IMAGERY

It is now necessary to discuss a subject that has the greatest importance in connection with all the arts, but which it seemed best to include in this chapter, rather than elsewhere. The reason for inserting it here will become apparent in the course of the discussion. The subject to which I refer is

called Imagery, a slightly alarming name for an ordinary, everyday thing with which we are all familiar, but to which we seldom give any thought.

Most of us use the phrase: "I see it in my mind's eye," pretty frequently. When we say that we can see a place or a friend in our mind's eye, we mean that although they are not actually present before us, we can picture them as if they were. This is Imagery, or to be more accurate, Visual or Eye-imagery, Imagery connected with the sense of seeing. We take all this so much for granted that we rarely think what an amazing and wonderful faculty it is. So much, moreover, do we use our power of Eye-imagery that we forget that there is Imagery corresponding to the other senses, that we can imagine what it is like to hear something not actually being heard, to smell something not actually being smelt, to taste something not actually being tasted, to feel something not actually being felt. Nearly everyone has his power of Eye-imagery well developed and makes frequent use of it, but for some reason that is not altogether apparent very little use is made of the Ear-, Smell-, Taste-, and Touch-imageries, so little use, in fact, that many people are quite unaware that they possess them.

Now it is obvious that we make considerable use of our powers of imagery in looking at a picture. We see a tree painted, and subconsciously, we imagine what a real tree is like and compare the paint-

ing with the image. Supposing that we see a velvet dress depicted, how do we decide whether the velvet is well-painted or otherwise? We use Eye-imagery which tells us whether the velvet in the picture looks like real velvet. If we had no power of imagery we should be forced to procure a piece of velvet in order to make the comparison. We also use our Touch-imagery. We know what it feels like to touch velvet and, subconsciously, again, we test the accuracy of the painting by imagining what the velvet in it would feel like were it possible to touch it. It is the power of Touch-imagery that we chiefly use in looking at a piece of sculpture.

The surest way of discovering whether an object is solid is to go up to it and touch it. Babies frequently make this test. By experience, as we grow up, we come to know that certain objects are solid without having actually to touch them. Instead of using our Touch-sense we use our Touch-imagery. Now a statue is something to be looked at, rather than something to be touched, and it is by our Touch-imagery that we test its merit. If it represents the figure of, say, a woman, we are concerned with deciding whether the limbs have a solid appearance, that is to say whether they look like solid limbs of flesh and blood, or simply like pieces of marble, etc., having the outlines of human anatomy. The difference is greater than might be

at first supposed, and can be understood best by the actual study of a statue rather than by explanations which would involve the use of long and difficult terms.

MOVEMENT

An important subject in connection with Sculpture (and here much of what is said may be applied to Painting) is the way in which movement may be suggested. All statues do not represent postures of repose. Many represent men in the act of running or jumping, girls dancing and so forth. Although there is no actual movement there is no doubt in our minds that movement is suggested. Why is there no doubt? Here again, though perhaps we do not realize it, we make use of our powers of Imagery. We know what it feels like to run, or jump, or dance, and we recognize the position of the statue as being typical of one of those activities. The sculptor selects one particular posture and unconsciously we supply the rest. This is an obvious fact, although the process by which we realize the presence of movement may be less obvious. It is mentioned because it forms a suitable introduction to a special way of suggesting movement which is known as Distortion. A sculptor who makes use of Distortion, instead of selecting one posture out of the many, tries to combine several. The result is a compromise which does not represent any actual

position, but indicates a number of consecutive positions of the limbs. Once more a picture would be of service in showing precisely what is meant. In the absence of one, it may sound a little obscure. But it is highly important. Before condemning a statue because it represents a position which we know to be humanly impossible, we should look very carefully to see whether the impossibility has not been intentional, whether the sculptor has not succeeded, by this method, in suggesting a great deal of movement and action. Very often if we look at a statue with this in mind, its meaning will become much clearer to us.

CONCLUSION

The reason for taking all these matters into consideration is in order that we may appreciate, to the fullest possible extent, the design of the whole; in order that we may be as well equipped as we are able, for responding to such an intricate communication of experience as a piece of sculpture. As with all the other arts, we have got to firmly keep the remembrance that a statue is something which is producing a response within our own minds, and that its goodness or badness depends upon the value of that response, upon whether it produces an organization of ourselves which we can properly consider valuable. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, the highly representational character of

most sculpture may be a hindrance to our realizing this. We may very easily overstress the importance of the Representation and forget to notice the Selection, which has been made in order to achieve the Design, to perfect the communication.

While I desire nothing less than to force my personal likes and dislikes on my readers, particularly since any examples I mention may only be accessible to a small percentage of them, I here take the liberty of suggesting an opportunity for comparing good and bad sculpture, that is available for any who visit the city of Washington. Those who cannot do this can obtain photographs without difficulty which will enable them, in some degree, to make the comparison.

The example of bad art to which I refer is the statue of Abraham Lincoln by Daniel Chester French which is located inside the Lincoln Memorial. A loyal citizen of the United States, carried away by admiration for Lincoln himself, may find himself prejudiced in the statue's favor, forgetting to regard it as a work of art. If, however, he is able to approach it in a sufficiently unprejudiced state of mind, he will be able to detect that lack of solidity, which was mentioned above, and the clumsiness of the design. Its likeness to the original may be excellent but it seems to lack the quality of order and coherence which is an essential of great art. The other example involves a rather dull trolley-

ride to the Soldiers' Home. Close to the terminal is the Rock Creek Cemetery which offers many opportunities for studying sculpture of unspeakable badness, but contains one piece of work of outstanding merit—the memorial to Mrs. Adams by the late Augustus St. Gaudens. It is shut off from the usual graveyard horrors outside by a circle of dark trees which makes it possible to contemplate it without interruption. The most striking thing about it is its perfect design. It contains nothing irrelevant, nothing overemphasized and nothing cheap or sentimental. Everything about it contributes to the whole, to the main idea underlying it. To contemplate it, after the Lincoln statue, is to understand the difference between good art and bad, better than any words can explain.

DEVELOPMENT OF SCULPTURE

Since all modern sculpture is fundamentally indebted to antiquity, we may conveniently begin this outline of the development and chief styles of European sculpture with the Greek and Roman periods.

GREEK SCULPTURE (c. 625 B.C.-27 B.C.). The Great Period in Greek sculpture began in about 480 B.C. Before the fifth century, Greek art was extremely archaic—that is, stiff, formal and unlikelike—but in the Great Period it reached unparalleled heights. The outstanding characteristics of the sculpture of the fifth century are its calm and repose. The three foremost artists of the period were Myron, Polyclitus and Phidias. Of Myron's works, the best known is the *Discus*

Thrower, justly esteemed for its splendid suggestion of action. Polyclitus devoted himself to the creation of the ideal proportions of the human figure. Phidias, probably the greatest of the three, was in charge of the beautifying of all Athens and supervised the magnificent sculptures of the Parthenon, if he did not actually execute many of them.

The fourth century saw the growth of an increasing individualism. Its great masters were Praxiteles, (whose *Hermes* is still preserved), Scopas and Lysippus. After the conquests of Alexander, Greek art underwent a complete change. From the idealism of the fifth century, art turned to subjects of suffering and remorse and became interested in portraiture and landscape. This is called the Hellenistic Period (323-146 B.C.) and among its products are the *Apollon Belvedere*, the *Venus of Melos* and the *Dying Gladiator*. After the Roman conquest of Greece in 146 B.C., artists either continued the Hellenistic tradition (e.g. *The Laocoön Group*) or devoted themselves to imitating older works.

ROMAN SCULPTURE (27 B.C.-330 A.D.) is chiefly characterized by its realism. It takes three important forms: historical reliefs (a relief being sculpture which is attached to its background), portraiture and sarcophagi (coffins). The reliefs, which usually decorated public monuments (e.g. *The Column of Trajan*) show two important new developments: the attempt to express several depths, and the use of the continuous method of representation, that is, the continuation of different episodes of a story in the same relief. The portraits of the period are rendered with precision and faithfulness to life. The sarcophagi date, for the most part, from the end of the period and the reliefs with which they are decorated exhibit the tendency toward

over-crowding, incorrect proportion and exaggeration of expression which mark the decline of Roman art.

CHRISTIAN SCULPTURE (up to 1000 A.D.). During the first centuries of Christianity, Christian artists merely took over the Roman forms and style with which they were familiar and adapted them to their own religious beliefs. The most numerous monuments of the period were sarcophagi, but some beautifully carved ivories were also produced.

ROMANESQUE SCULPTURE (eleventh and most of the twelfth centuries). In this period sculpture becomes the handmaid of architecture. It is thought of only as a part of the architectural scheme and therefore is flat and formal. The human shape is elongated and twisted to conform to the lines of the church, and drapery is treated in long, narrow, decorative folds. Subjects are chiefly drawn from sacred history or legend, although, especially in the capitals (the upper part) of columns, artists portrayed every phase of human life—its battles, amusements and trades. Animals are introduced as often as possible and the labors of the months are frequently represented. Romanesque sculpture, like Romanesque architecture, often attained majesty and nobility but never attained truth to reality (e.g. *Last Judgment*, Autun). France was the center of art in this and in the Gothic period.

GOTHIC SCULPTURE (end of twelfth, and the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries). The chief difference between Romanesque and Gothic sculpture is that Gothic sought all its models in nature. Statues become rounder, and begin to stand forth from the building, although not yet free from architectural trammels. The human form, the treatment of drapery and the floral decorative patterns are studied from real-

ity. All the knowledge of the period was carved upon the church—the aim of the church and of the sculptor being to teach. The high point of Gothic art was in the thirteenth century (e.g. front portals of Amiens). In the fourteenth century, art turned from the church to the carving of figures for tombs and to individual statues of the Virgin and Child, the development tending toward less idealism and greater affectation. In this century, the pose of the Virgin, in which the head is thrown back, and the body bent to the side, became popular. The fifteenth century is characterized by much greater realism and interest in naturalistic portraiture, inspired, especially, by a strong Flemish school.

The Gothic sculpture of Italy, though influenced by that of France, differs from it in two important respects: it exhibited less architectural and more classical feeling and most of the works were those of named artists. The Pulpit of the Baptistry, Pisa (1260), by Nicola Pisano, employs decided Roman types, but the Pulpit at Pistoia, by his son Giovanni, reasserts northern naturalistic influence. In the fourteenth century the Pisan style was carried to Florence by Andrea Pisano, who executed in bronze the first doors of the Baptistry at Florence, a work of simplicity and grace strongly influenced by the painter Giotto. Andrea Orcagna is an even closer follower of the style of Giotto.

The fifteenth century in Italy, in sculpture as in painting, is the EARLY RENAISSANCE and differs from the Middle Ages in its greater interest in antiquity and its greater emphasis upon personality. Art centered in Florence, where the second and third doors of the Baptistry, by Ghiberti, show the transition from Gothic to Renaissance sculpture. The first great Renaissance master was Donatello, whose realism, thoughtfulness

and boldness were an inspiration to the whole Renaissance. His *David* in bronze was the first single nude statue since antiquity. Most of his followers were sculptors of sentiment, including the spiritual Della Robbia family, who devoted themselves to the use of glazed terra cotta, and the charming and delicate Desiderio da Settignano. The great scientist of the period was Verrocchio, whose work was a culmination of the realism of Donatello.

The fifteenth century, or HIGH RENAISSANCE, exhibits more closer dependence upon the antique than the fifteenth century. The nude becomes more popular as a subject for art and its forms more robust. The greatest sculptor of the High Renaissance was Michelangelo, who, although using classical types, chiefly in the nude, by his vitality and originality of thought saved art, for a time, from slavish imitation of the antique (e.g. Tombs of the Medici in San Lorenzo, Florence). Two tendencies mark the rest of the sixteenth century sculpture in Italy: the colossal, which copied the great muscular forms of Michelangelo but made them meaningless and cold (e.g. Bandinelli) and the delicate tendency, which copied the light and graceful style of earlier Florentine art (e.g. Cellini). The first of these was the more influential in the rest of Europe.

The seventeenth century was dominated by the style known as BAROQUE, initiated by Italy. The outstanding features of Baroque sculpture are its emphasis upon movement and its general effect of agitation. Its chief exponent in the seventeenth century was Bernini. The Baroque style, little modified, persisted through the eighteenth century.

The Renaissance did not reach the northern countries until the beginning of the sixteenth century and it

was the cold style of the High Renaissance which was then adopted. France created the most important school of Renaissance sculpture outside Italy and her sculptors learned the Italian manner at first hand from the artists who were imported by Francis I. The two great French sculptors of the period were Goujon and Pilon, who mellowed the classicism of Italy by their typically French grace and elegance.

Although the Baroque style did influence France in the seventeenth century, it was never very strong and was replaced by the severe classicism of the reign of Louis XIV (1661-1715), which, while deriving from the High Renaissance and the antique, was nevertheless much more formal and pompous—like life in the Palace of Versailles, where art centered. The outstanding sculptors of this reign were Coysevox, Girardon, the Coustous and, apart from the general tendency, Puget. With the reign of Louis XV (1715-1774) art, like life, became gayer, freer and more informal. This new style of the eighteenth century is called rococo and is illustrated in the sculpture of Falconet, Pigalle, Pajou and Clodion. Houdon, famous for his keen, naturalistic portraiture (e.g. *Voltaire*) belongs to this period but is far removed from it in style.

At the end of the eighteenth century and for the first quarter of the nineteenth, the movement known as NEO-CLASSICISM prevailed throughout Europe. It consisted of slavish imitation of classical antiquity, even portraits being adapted to classical models. Its great leaders were Canova, an Italian, and Thorvaldsen, who was born in Denmark, but lived at Rome. The strictest form of Neo-classicism prevailed during the time of Napoleon in France, and it was there that the various forms of reaction centered.

The earliest of these, ROMANTICISM, did not take the strong hold upon sculpture that it did upon painting. Realism, however, manifested itself with increasing strength through the century (e.g. Rude and Dalou). By the middle of the nineteenth century this realism was united with a new interest in earlier styles, especially the Baroque. The imitation of the Baroque resulted in great pictorialism, which first exhibited itself only in love of movement, but later went so far as to break up the surfaces in order to produce a play of light and shade. Illustrated first in such artists as Carpeaux, this pictorial tendency culminated, at the end of the century, in Rodin, who brought IMPRESSIONISM into sculpture. In reaction against Impressionism, another school, headed by Maillol, has arisen which aims to restore the true character of sculpture by imitating the primitive styles (archaic Greek, Romanesque and oriental) in which solidity and design were the essential features. This movement is known as "stylization." Other general, related tendencies have been the cultivation of form for form's sake, devotion to the use of the nude (e.g. Falguière) and the vogue for public monuments for commemoration.

CHAPTER VII

ON LISTENING TO MUSIC

"Far, too far-off, for wings of words to follow."
—Swinburne.

AT the beginning of our discussion on architecture we noted that the opportunities for studying it were innumerable, and that it involved less trouble and expense to the student than any other art. Much the same thing is true of music, which may be said to be the next most accessible of the arts. Good concerts are frequent and not much more expensive than the movies, and those who live in large towns should find little difficulty in attending one at least once a month. Then there is the phonograph, an invention which has made it really possible for everyone to hear music, and to hear it as often, and for just as long, as he likes. First-class records are not costly, and are an investment which repays the original outlay a hundred times. Consequently the objection of lack of opportunity which some might legitimately have raised in connection with painting and sculpture is not here valid.

THE PECULIAR DIFFICULTIES OF MUSIC

We must begin by considering certain features of music that distinguish it from the other arts. First of all it resembles poetry, and differs from painting, sculpture and architecture, in that it is, so to speak, continuous rather than stationary. In studying a picture we have the whole thing before us, and can take our time in looking at it. We can turn our attention away from it for a few moments, conscious that it will be there when we want it again. Music, however, is a succession of events. It goes on for a period of time, and something new is coming to our ears every second. We may compare it to a railroad journey, in which the old scenery is always being replaced by the new while painting etc. are like a scene which is before our eyes for a long period of time to be studied at leisure.*

This simple fact makes listening to music a difficult and sometimes tedious business. We have to keep our attention riveted on what is happening and to bear in mind what has gone before. Inability to do this is the reason why so many people are bored with what they call classical music, which seems to them an incomprehensible succession of sounds.

Another peculiarity of music, and one which

* The question raised in this paragraph is dealt with at length in Lessing's *Laocöon*. (See Chapter X.)

only adds to the difficulty, lies in the medium that it employs. We can connect the media of the other arts—words, color and so forth—with ordinary everyday things. They are familiar to us in all sorts of ways. They mean something definite and tangible. Musical sounds, on the other hand, are vague, remote things. We may find them pleasant but we cannot put their meaning into words. We know that some music makes us feel sad and that some makes us want to dance, but it is not easy to say clearly why we feel this. This makes it exceedingly difficult to write about music in a simple way, and without having recourse to technical or symbolic language which would add to the obscurity of the subject. My aim in this chapter will be what it has been everywhere else, to suggest certain lines of thought that may lead to better understanding and love of what many consider the greatest of all the arts.

We have not yet come to the end of the difficulties! The other arts are usually affairs of two people—the artist, and the reader or spectator. For the vast majority music is an affair of three—the composer, the interpreter (by which I mean the orchestra in the case of elaborate music) and the listener. The listener's reactions depend upon the reactions of somebody else. Two people may interpret a different piece of music in very different ways and the listener cannot always be sure that

either is what the composer intended. He has thus got to make a double judgment—first on the work itself, and secondly on the particular interpretation to which he has been listening.

MUSIC FOR THE VOICE AND FOR INSTRUMENTS

Next it must be remembered that there are two very distinct kinds of music—vocal, or music which is meant to be sung, and instrumental, or music which is meant to be played. This introduces still further complications, and I would here insert a word to the reader not to be discouraged and remind him of the sentence quoted in the introduction: "They see not clearest who see all things clear." Vocal music, which includes chiefly songs for solo, or chorus, or both, involves questions connected with poetry. The composer of a song is concerned with interpreting the words of a poem, and the listener has to take this into account. In spite of this complication vocal music is in many ways simpler to understand, and appreciation of it often leads to better appreciation of the instrumental kind.

THE APPEAL OF RHYTHM

Alarmed by the difficulties, suggested rather than explained in the foregoing paragraphs, the reader may wonder why it is that music, in some form or other, has such a very wide and popular appeal.

For those who have never been into a picture gallery or have never opened a book of poetry in their lives, know something of music. The most ignorant kind of man can whistle a simple tune and derive enjoyment from listening to a military band. The best explanation of this seems to be that music contains what is known as rhythm. So, in a wider sense of the term, do all the other arts, but the rhythm of music is more easily detectable by the untrained ear. Just why rhythm causes such pleasure to human beings is not altogether clear, although psychologists have put forward some ingenious theories. But a moment's thought will show that it is something which even the weakest intellect can appreciate. I have often stopped a baby from crying simply by beating at regular intervals on a table, and primitive peoples, and even animals, respond very quickly to it with evident signs of pleasure.

The modern jazz music, designed for purpose of dancing (another intensely rhythmical art), usually has a very pronounced and, necessarily, unvaried rhythm. Any child can detect the regularly recurring beat of *Barcelona* or *Yes, sir, She's my Baby* or *Ain't She Sweet* or whatever happens to be the song hit of the moment when this book is published.

One of the reasons why such tunes have such brief popularity is that their rhythm is so simple and obvious that it quickly tires its listeners. In the

same way one of the reasons why the music of Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, and other great "classical" composers, never ceases to please, is that its rhythms are subtle, and require more effort to be understood. We soon get tired of something that we can obtain without difficulty. Great music, moreover, contains many and varied rhythms, thus producing that combination of different ideas that we saw in Chapter I to be a characteristic of good art.

THE APPEAL OF ASSOCIATION

Another reason, interesting rather than important, why music has a popular appeal, is its peculiar relation to memory. We have all of us experienced that sensation of vivid recollection that sometimes comes on hearing an old tune, long-since forgotten. The past seems to come flooding back, and emotions that had not come to us for years are suddenly present with all their original strength. I am not suggesting that there is some mysterious connection between the music and the emotions. It is of course, simply a question of association; but it is not clear just why music, more than anything else, should have this power of awakening our memory. The point is mentioned because it furnishes an explanation for that passionate affection or dislike for certain tunes, particularly hymns, entirely regardless of their merit or demerit, which people often ex-

hibit. They associate them with events in the past of which they like, or do not like, as the case may be, to be reminded. It is important to distinguish such judgments from genuine artistic criticism.

THE NECESSITY OF FAMILIARITY

We can now consider the more essential requisites for understanding and enjoying good music. As with the other arts the most important thing is to grasp the meaning of the whole. Too many people regard a piece of music as a succession of pleasant sounds, interspersed with less pleasant sounds. Here and there some particular tune or snatch of rhythm takes their fancy, and if this occurs with sufficient frequency they say that they like it. Otherwise they say that "there is no tune to the thing" and pronounce themselves bored. Now a piece of orchestral music known as a symphony—for example the famous *Unfinished Symphony* of Schubert—may take as long as thirty-five minutes to play straight through, and a Violin Sonata (a piece of music written for one violin with pianoforte accompaniment), like the equally famous work by César Franck, may take as long or longer. The strain upon the listener who has to follow the development of the piece and keep its construction clear in his mind, is far greater than most people can stand. At the first hearing, he will probably be able to make neither

head nor tail of the thing. In the case of the Schubert symphony, which has been admirably recorded by Mr. Stokowski's Philadelphia Orchestra, two pronounced tunes will probably please at once—the familiar opening tune of the first “movement” (or chapter) and the slow, exquisite melody in the second. In the case of the César Franck Sonata the listener will probably be utterly fatigued and at sea until the last movement, when a quick, sprightly tune will recall his wandering attention. In other cases he may not even have the consolation of liking anything at all. He may listen to a Brahms String Quartet (two violins, viola and 'cello) and pick out nothing which he can understand or enjoy. He must not, therefore, suppose either that the music is really dull, or that he is incapable of appreciating it. When I first came to New York I thought it the most horrible city that I had ever seen, but greater familiarity caused me to change my opinion. Appreciation and enjoyment of most good music can only come after it has been heard many times, and the listener begins to grasp the form or pattern of the whole in his mind.

THE PHONOGRAPH

The invention of the phonograph has, as we saw above, made this possible of achievement. We cannot have a piece repeated at a concert, but we can play it on the phonograph as often as we like. It

is useful if, before going to a concert, the pieces on the program can be heard in this way, so that enough familiarity is gained to make the concert a hundred times more enjoyable. In this connection it is interesting to note that, in the University of Cambridge, England, a club, known as the Gramophone Club, has recently been organized. This means that a large number of records are always available to members at a comparatively slight expense. The plan seems to be excellent in every way, and it is suggested that schools, colleges and other institutions in the United States might follow suit. But even where this is not possible, the purchase of one record a month is within everybody's reach, although I have always noticed that once they begin, their enthusiasm soon increases the monthly allowance!

THE ORCHESTRA

As a large proportion of music is orchestral, that is, written for several different instruments playing together, it may be well to say a few words on the composition of an orchestra. There are five different kinds of instruments of which four are in general use. The first group is called Strings and includes the violin, viola, violoncello and double bass; the second is the Wood-Wind (flutes, piccolo, clarinets, English horns, oboes, bassoons); the third is the Brass (trumpets, horns, trombones, sax-

ophones), the fourth, Percussion (drums, triangles, xylophones) and the fifth, Plucked Instruments, of which the harp is usually the only one used in classical music, but which includes banjos, ukaleles, and mandolins, familiar features of Jazz orchestras. It will be clear that a tune played on a violin will sound very different from the same tune played on a saxophone, which means to say that each instrument has its own particular quality or kind of sound peculiar to it. Anyone who has listened to a Jazz orchestra will know the effects that can be gained by using different combinations of instruments. The same is true of the older type of orchestra for which the *Unfinished Symphony* and countless other works were written. It is consequently well to train the ear to distinguish between the qualities of the various instruments, for this will add to the understanding and enjoyment of the piece. The composer may, for example, wish to emphasize a certain tune. He will first of all have it played, let us say, by the oboes, and will then hand it to the strings and finally to the full orchestra. Or again he may wish to have two tunes in action simultaneously. He will give one to the strings and the other to the brass, a process known technically as counterpoint. The phonograph is once more of assistance in training the ear in this way, while attendance at an orchestral rehearsal is even more valuable.

It is impossible to say more on this subject, but if the reader wishes to follow it up he should obtain Mr. Percy Scholes' *Listener's Guide to Music*,* an admirable little book, written for beginners, which says clearly and concisely everything that needs saying and no more. I have also thought it worth while to include a short list of records published by the Victor Recording Company of Camden, N. J., chosen as being likely to appeal to those who have not much acquaintance with music, and at the same time being all of them of the highest quality and excellence.

JAZZ MUSIC

Since the Jazz Orchestra is one of the commonest features of modern life, and is the agent which provides the vast majority with their entire musical fare, it seems advisable to include some mention of it in this chapter, particularly because it is eyed with such disfavor by many of the so-called "high-brows." Let it be said at once that much of this disfavor is justified. The majority of the Jazz music of today is bad art. It is commonplace, and flat, and repeats the same thing over and over again till the senses sicken. It must be remembered, however, that it has brought something new into music that is at least native American rather than thin imitation of something European. In this way it is a healthy sign, and from time to time a tune ap-

pears which shows, dimly perhaps, the possibilities of the Jazz style. It is doubtful whether pure Jazz music, restricted as it is by the necessity of accompanying a dance, can ever evolve into a great musical tradition, but it may infuse new blood into the older traditions that came from Germany, Italy, and France, and indeed is showing signs of doing so at the present moment. For this reason I regard it as short-sighted to condemn Jazz with a contemptuous sneer, or to suppose that the appreciation of one sort of music is a necessary obstacle to appreciation of another.

IMITATIVE MUSIC

We saw earlier that one of the difficulties of music lay in the fact that its meaning cannot usually be translated into words. It is made up of sounds which, to use a longer expression, have no verbal significance. This, however, is not true of all music. Certain sounds such as the galloping of horses, thunder, or the pattering of rain can very easily be imitated, and our pleasure at recognizing them sometimes leads us to think that they are a sign of merit. As a matter of fact there is no more merit in imitating a galloping horse in music, than in photographing it with a camera. Both actions demand nothing more than slight technical skill, and neither reflects unusual credit on the operator. Here again we must be careful to consider all the

parts of a piece of music in relation to the whole and not as important things in themselves. More often than not the purely imitative type of music is bad, simply because it is no more than imitation, but that does not necessarily mean that whenever it occurs in a piece it automatically condemns that piece. Its goodness or badness depends on its importance in relation to the design of the whole.

JUDGMENT OF MUSIC

We may conclude this chapter by a statement of how we should form our judgment of a musical composition. Provided that the communication is successful and that our response has been adequate the composition must be judged, like all other works of art, on the feelings it arouses in us. If these feelings are valuable, according to the definition of value in Chapter I, then we are justified in describing the composition as good. Sometimes we are uncertain about our feelings, a state of affairs which indicates, either unsuccessful communication, or inadequate response. Sometimes our feelings are of the sentimental variety, and sentimentality is always bad. It consists in circling round one emotion because we find it pleasant and refusing to go further and take more risks. Sometimes music can appeal to our sexual impulses, stir them into the right or wrong sort of action. The possibilities are endless, but it is hoped that enough has been said to indicate

the lines on which the listener should go to work. Finally, let him remember these words of a distinguished American conductor: "I have often been asked what kind of music should be used in concerts which are meant to appeal to the great mass of our people, those who are as yet uninitiated into the secrets of our art. There can only be only one answer—*the best music possible.*"

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSIC

When it is said that music is the youngest of the arts, it is meant that it has been longest in gaining an independence of its own apart from its being the accompaniment of dances, religious ceremonies, and similar events, and that the records that have come down to us are few and not very reliable. In all probability the beginnings of music coincide with the beginnings of the human race. We can hardly imagine a time when human beings did not use their voices in some form of emotional expression; and as far back as there are any historical records there are traces of such an activity.

Folk songs, in which people in their daily life gave expression to their joys and sorrows, are characterized by a freshness, a simplicity, and a directness of utterance in which the words and music are closely bound together. The features which give folk music its artistic and historic chief importance are those which show the unconscious working of a perfect design. That is, there is in them a unity of thought and a variety of detail, whether this is accomplished with a balance of two phrases, or of three, in which latter case the third brings with it a restatement or summary of the first. Any folk

tune, such as the Irish *Londonderry Air* or the Russian *Volga Boat Song* will illustrate this.

The music of the Greeks is distinguished from that of other ancient nations by its greater refinement and scientific elaboration, and also by the fact that the Greeks devised a fairly accurate system of writing music which has survived. The typical instruments of the Greeks were the lyre and the flute; harsh noisy instruments were usually avoided.

Pagan Rome made no contribution to musical progress; its music was chiefly derived from the Etruscans and the Greeks.

With the rise of the power of the Christian church, music came under its influence. The tendency of church music to become essentially ritualistic was a phase of the transition from the simple church system of the days of the apostles to the highly organized institution which developed later. The most important fact in this transition is the transfer of the singing from the general congregation to a choir, for song was thought of as part of the office of prayer, and therefore a priestly rite. This was also done to prevent any heretical doctrines from being introduced by hymns of the people. The entire service was rendered in a form known as Plain Song or Gregorian Chant, and at this time the music was considered less important than the text. The song, at first unaccompanied by any instrument or voice, from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries became contrapuntal (i.e. music in which several melodies are being sounded at the same time) for unaccompanied chorus. This form originated in one voice following after another, singing the same tune, and is given the name of fugue (from the Latin word to flee). (*Three Blind Mice*, sung as a round, is a simple example of this.

The common idea that contrapuntal music is necessarily a dry, intellectual style can easily be seen to be a misconception when one hears, for example, the overture to Wagner's opera *Die Meistersinger*, which, besides being a perfect overture in that it presents all the musical ideas to follow, is also contrapuntal music of great emotional power. In contrast to modern works, which attempt to interpret the words, the music of this period tended rather to suggest only a general feeling of devotion. The height of church music was reached by Palestrina (1526-1594) and Orlandus Lassus (1520-1594). The rise of Protestantism, with its protest against an external authority, restored the idea of the congregational singing. The choir was retained but not exalted above the congregation, and the music took the form of a chorale sung in unison by the congregation accompanied contrapuntally by the choir. About 1600, the organ began also to function as the choir, and this began a new school of church music.

While the contrapuntal chorus was achieving its perfection in the age of Palestrina and Lassus, a movement was slowly forming which greatly influenced music. With the Renaissance, which had transferred the other arts to entirely new bases, music too was needed for other purposes—for the theatre, domestic enjoyment, etc.—and the forms which existed in the sixteenth century could not meet these demands. The search for these new forms is the history of music of the seventeenth century. The form which first received attention was the madrigal, and with it as an accompaniment for poetry there came about a greater development of harmonic music (i. e. a melody supported by chords). Of vast importance at this time was the invention of the opera (a form uniting music and the drama). The

first works in this form were written by Peri and Caccini in the late sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century new impetus was given to opera by Monteverde (1568-1643), who had a great feeling for melody and for the use of music for intensifying dramatic effects, and by Scarlatti (1659-1725) who, apart from his great musical gift, chiefly of melody, affected the model of later opera by the structure of his. In England, the chief works of importance were those of Henry Purcell (1658-1695). Instrumental music also received the general stimulus of this age, and the violin became prominent because of its brilliancy and expressiveness. Composers wrote pieces for violin solo, with a less important accompaniment of other instruments, and thus led the way to works depending upon a single melody instead of upon the combination of several. In writing for the violin, the adoption and imitation of dance forms was of great importance, for it was in writing several of these played one after another, varying in mood from grave to gay, that the sonata (a composition, for one or more instruments, usually of three or four movements of different moods), originated. The first stage in this development ends with Corelli (1653-1713), and from this point the further development can be traced in keyed instruments (such as the piano). In England at this time the great composers for the clavier (the forerunner of the piano) were Tallis and Byrd. But it was in France, however, in the works of Rameau (1683-1764) and Couperin (1668-1733), that clavier music made the greatest advances. Couperin wrote sets of short pieces called suites, many of which, in having titles, anticipate modern programme music. The further history of the clavier suite is seen in Germany, where it was cultivated by all the instrumentalists of note and

received its highest development at the hands of Bach. The limits of this development were reached early in the eighteenth century when it began to give way to the sonata. The Italians did not contribute much to the progress of clavier music, with the exception of Domenico Scarlatti, who was the most brilliant performer of his time, and whose technic approached that of modern times. His importance is partly due to his revelation of new possibilities in his instrument.

With the development of the dramatic style, Italy took the lead in musical progress. At first this influence was resisted in Germany, but one group, by basing its art on the old German chorus, organ music and popular hymns, and by adding to these the Italian melodic style, started the movement which rose to its greatest heights in the church music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Bach carried contrapuntal music to its highest point. Although he wrote for orchestra and violin solo, his greatest achievements are his organ and choral works; e.g. the *Organ Preludes*, the *St. Mathew Passion*, the *Mass in B Minor*, to mention only a few. A study of the 48 short preludes and fugues for clavier of *The Well Tempered Clavichord*, embodying as they do the essence of his genius, will give the listener an understanding and appreciation of the music of Bach, who is considered by many the composer of "the most subtle and universal force in the development of music."

George Frederick Handel (1685-1759), a contemporary of Bach, developed a more harmonic style and is best known for his *Messiah* and what is known as the *Largo* from the opera *Xerxes*. He added to the development of the symphony (a sonata for orchestra) and wrote many lovely melodies (e.g. *Where'er you Walk and O Sleep, why dost thou leave me?*). His *Water*

Music, though not very often played, is a work of beauty rare.

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) is the first great name in the history of the fully developed sonata form. We find in his symphonies a greater emphasis placed on a second theme, a greater development of the two themes, and then a restatement or a summing up. His best known symphony, the *Surprise Symphony*, and any of the string quartets illustrate this. Haydn's close contact and keen sympathy with the people led him to perpetuate the spirit of his native music in these forms.

Wolfgang Amade Mozart (1756-1791) embodies more perfectly than anyone else the classic spirit in music. He made little contribution in the creation of new forms, except in the remarkable characterization of people in his operas (*Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *The Magic Flute*). His work is characterized by an almost ceaseless flow of melody. His best known symphonies are the E flat, C major, and G minor, the last of which is a perfect example of his art, and is, perhaps, the finest instrumental music of the eighteenth century.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) marks the highest development of the sonata form, and he is best known for his nine great symphonies, particularly numbers V, III, VII, and IX, and for his sonatas for piano; the best known of which are the *Appassionata*, the *Waldstein*, and the *Moonlight*. Beethoven's work is marked by a variety of expression, "a great individual and personal feeling, and an intense and passionate utterance." His orchestration, also, is more varied and more colorful than that of his predecessors, and his compositions show the transition from classicism to romanticism in music. His supreme power is shown not only in his actual

works but also in his influence upon Schumann, Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, Berlioz, and others.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) has the distinction of having raised a musical form from comparative obscurity to a place of importance. Although Schubert wrote symphonies (the most known of which is the *Unfinished*), string quartets and other instrumental works, his greatness is due to his songs for single voice with piano accompaniment. He was the first to develop the piano accompaniment as an essential part of the song. Some of his best known songs are the *Serenade*, *Hark! Hark! the Lark*, and *Who is Sylvia?*

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) was the leader of the romantic movement in music. He was aware of the romantic tendencies in his work, influenced greatly by romantic writers, and "with him the romantic ideal in music acquired self-consciousness." His most important contributions are to be found in his piano works and songs, in which there are a freedom of form, an intensely subjective imagination, and a variety of tone, color and rhythm. His best known works are the *Scenes of Childhood*, the *Novelettes*, *Papillons*, *Carnaval*, *Kreisleriana*, and *Études Symphoniques* for piano solo; the *Concerto in A Minor* for piano and orchestra; and his songs, of which *The Two Grenadiers* is probably the most popular.

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847) is known to most people for his *Songs without Words* and the very popular *Spring Song*, for the piano, and for the *Wedding March* from *Midsummer's Night's Dream* for orchestra. His orchestral works have a light and delicate sense of humor and playfulness which is well exemplified in the *Overture to Midsummer's Night's Dream*. He did much for the revival of the interest and appreciation of Bach which is at so great a height today.

Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) stands first among the great piano composers, and he, like Schubert, gained his place by virtue of a single musical form. His piano pieces, in a few thin volumes, contain an extraordinary abundance of ideas combined with a freedom of technic which was revolutionary at that period. His Polish ancestry can be felt in his *Mazurkas* and *Polonaises*, which are idealizations of native dances. His *Etudes*, *Nocturnes*, *Waltzes* and *Preludes* show that richness and brilliance of color, and variety of mood which are characteristic of the Romantic movement.

Programme Music has developed with the idea that the subject of music should dictate the method of treatment, and this theory involves the ability of music to communicate to the imagination a definite object rather than an abstract design. The first great figure in this movement was Hector Berlioz (1803-1869). The enthusiasm for local color, truth to locality and character, typical of the programme school is seen in his works, which are of a marked boldness, brilliancy and extravagance. Berlioz thought orchestrally; tone color was a part of the design, and by emphasizing this and by showing the possibilities of orchestration, he greatly influenced modern music. His best known works are *The Damnation of Faust*, *Romeo and Juliette*, and the famous arrangement of Weber's *Invitation to the Dance*. Franz Liszt (1811-1886), best known for his piano pieces or piano transcriptions, is also an important figure in this movement. His transcriptions were a resetting of these works within the limits of the piano and he succeeded in retaining much of the original color. In the *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, his most popular works, he makes use of many native melodies and themes.

In the meantime Italian opera had blossomed anew in

the works of Rossini (1792-1868) who greatly enlarged the importance of the orchestra in opera (e.g. *The Barber of Seville*, *William Tell*), and in his followers Donizetti and Bellini. French opera, too, was becoming more florid in style in the hands of Meyerbeer (*Les Huguenots*, *L'Africaine*) and Halevy (*La Juive*). In Germany the direction in the rise of a German school of opera had been established chiefly by Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) whose operas (e. g. *Der Freischütz*) in which the plots and characters were drawn from native sources, show an extensive use of the supernatural and a prominence of orchestral color. Weber made great use of special tones of individual instruments for heightening dramatic effects, and in this he foreshadowed Wagner and Berlioz.

But it was Richard Wagner (1813-1883) who revolutionized opera. He conceived the music drama to be the highest form of art, as being a fusion of the two arts of drama and music. The tendency to employ the orchestra as an integral part of the drama reached its climax in Wagner, and in his works the orchestra is a "mirror which reflects" everything that is happening on the stage. He added instruments for necessary effects and discovered unsuspected powers in old instruments, and as a "musical scene-painter" he is unsurpassed. His greatest achievement, however, is as an orchestral portrayer of emotional states (e.g. *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, *Die Götterdämmerung*, etc.).

One composer whose work was not much influenced by Wagner was Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901), who is, perhaps, Italy's most famous dramatic composer. His early works were much like those of Donizetti and Bellini, but later his expressiveness grew, and he sought

more and more to portray feelings as well as situation. His best known works are *Aïda*, *Otello*, and *Falstaff*, *Il Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, and, opera apart, his *Requiem*.

The most conspicuous composer, next to Wagner, in the last half of the nineteenth century was Johannes Brahms (1833-1897). He stood in direct contrast to the tendencies of his times and was the champion of the classic idea of music. His symphonies and other orchestral works are written in a sonorous, broad, and reflective style, and are filled with melodies of great beauty and deep feeling. His piano music shows a free style and a great variety of rhythm, and his songs, like Schumann's, follow the method of giving equal importance to the accompaniment. His four-hand version of the *Hungarian Dances*, and his arrangements of the German folk songs, preserve all the original beauty of this music, while adding to it by his own gifts.

In modern French music a name which stands alone is that of César Franck (1822-1890). A *genre* (the sonata form) not greatly developed before in France is reborn and carried to new heights in his compositions, which are dramatic, rich and colorful, complex in structure, yet suffused with exquisite melody. His best known works are the *Symphony in D Minor* and the *Sonata in A Major* for violin and piano. In Claude Debussy (1862-1918), who has greatly influenced modern music, France's music was in direct contrast to the realistic programme music of Germany. In Debussy's works sharp outlines disappear and the most delicate emotions are expressed by vague shadowy sounds. He is like the impressionistic painter and uses sounds for suggestion. His most famous works are *The Afternoon of a Faun*, *Nocturnes* and the opera *Pelléas and Melisande*.

The chief figure in Germany today is Richard Strauss

(1864-19—), who has brought the programme method to its height. His works are "condensed and detailed dramas, novels, or philosophic schemes without words or action" and they range in their vivid realism from the ugly to the sublime, and from wit and irony to a transcendental beauty. He has enlarged the territory of instrumental music so that every instrument in the orchestra is made to add to the gorgeous color with which he paints. His works, like Wagner's, have themes with definite meanings attached to them, and although he has sought to make the orchestra tell a story, he has not sacrificed the fundamental principles of great music. His best known works are *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, *Don Juan*, *Death and Transfiguration*, *The Life of a Hero*, *Salome* and his opera *Rosenkavalier*, in which he returns to the more classic spirit characteristic of his early works and which is also found in his songs.

In Russia the rise of music was slower than in other countries. Mikhail Glinka (1804-1857) is said to be the father of Russian music, because he broke away from the influence of foreign schools. His *Life for the Czar*, a work of truly national character, resulted in the founding of the famous Neo-Russian school led by Cesar Cui (1835-1918). The chief members of this group were Alexander Borodin (1834-1887) whose *Prince Igor* is well known by the "Polovtzhian Dances," Mili Balakirev, Modeste Moussorgsky (1835-1881), whose opera *Boris Goudunov* stands alone in its intense reality and treatment of a national subject in a thoroughly native manner, and Rimsky Korsakov (1844-1908) whose *Scheherezade* and *Le Coq d'Or* in which the famous "Hymn to the Sun" appears are often heard. This group created a national tradition, drawing on the rich heritage of Russian folk music. Peter Ilyitch Tchai-

kovsky (1840-1893) is the best known composer of Russia. His music, although influenced, unlike that of the Neo-Russian group, by western Europe, is suffused with a melancholy expressed in the melody, color and rhythm. His most popular work is the *Pathétique* symphony.

Native music has also had an important influence in the works of composers of other countries. In Scandinavia in the works of Eduard Grieg (1843-1907) (e.g. the *Peer Gynt Suite*); in Finland in those of Sibelius (e.g. *Finlandia*); in Bohemia in those of Dvorak (e.g. *Slavic Dances*, the *New World Symphony*, which, however, makes use of American Negro Spirituals) and in the works of Smetana (e.g. *The Bartered Bride*); in Spain in those of Granados and Albeniz. England's folk music, too, is finding a place of importance in the works of Vaughan Williams, Sir Edward Elgar, Peter Warlock and others.

The experiments in discords and broken rhythm of the modern school may be noticed particularly in Scriabin's *Divine Poem*, *Poem of Ecstasy* and in Igor Stravinsky's brilliant ballets *The Fire Bird*, *Petroushka* and *Le Sacre du Printemps* (which have greatly influenced much present day music) and in the works of Rachmaninoff, Prokofieff, Varèse, Milhaud (e.g. *Le Roi David*), Bloch, Schoenberg, Casella, de Falla and others.

America's music is not yet greatly developed, Edward Macdowell (1861-1908) being her greatest composer. Others are Chadwick, Parker, Converse, Carpenter, Griffes, Hadley, Powell and Deems Taylor. The tendency to make use of the native music (*Brockway, Kentucky Mountain Songs*) and the great interest evinced in the Negro Spirituals, besides certain distinctive features of jazz music, augurs well for the future.

The following are the names and reference numbers of some records published by the Victor Talking Machine Company of Camden, N. J. They have been chosen as being likely to appeal to those not familiar with classical music. The reader should refer to Chapter VII.

Instrumental

Järnefeldt—Praeludium	20374
Schubert—Symphony in B Minor.....	6459, 6460, 6461
Bach—Air for G String from Suite in D Major....	35656
Schubert—Ballet from <i>Rosamond</i>	723
Mozart—Minuet for String Quartet.....	6121
Wagner—Overture to <i>Die Meistersinger von</i> <i>Nürnberg</i>	6651

Vocal

Mozart—"Largo al factotum della citta".....	6263
Schubert—"Who is Sylvia?"	} Educational Series No. 3
Purcell—"I attempt from Love's sickness to fly"	
Handel—"O sleep why dost thou leave me?"	749
Negro Spirituals—"Deep River"	527
"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"	20068

The above records might form the nucleus of a library. There are hundreds of others equally good or better.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MOVIES

"I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him."

THE movies are the chief form of amusement of the vast majority of the population of America, and, in consequence, must exercise a deep influence upon their opinions about life in general and art in particular. The movies are with us, and are here to stay, and they have got to be taken into account. There is another reason for treating them in this book, namely, that they supply us with a number of interesting examples of bad art, in a way that can be appreciated by everyone. Very occasionally they supply us with good art and are then extremely beneficial. For, many people who regard art with distrust, contempt or indifference, unconsciously enjoy it when witnessing the presentation of a good film. The fact that they do not know it is art is in many ways an advantage.

STOCK SITUATIONS

Let us begin by considering the ordinary bad film and discover why it is bad; for, if we can understand the reasons for badness in a film, it will

assist us in understanding reasons for badness in other forms of art. The average society-drama, sex-entanglement, or super-picture, contains a number of characters who find themselves in an unsatisfactory situation of one sort or another, and who succeed in improving it. We are all familiar with the society butterfly, or wicked chorus-girl who gets tired of her gay life; with the hero who invariably extricates himself from the most impossible difficulties; with the erring wife whose better nature finally brings her back to her lawful husband. These kinds of situations are repeated over and over again, with slight variations, in ninety percent of the films being shown at the present time. Now repetition brings conviction, and if a man or woman go to the movies two nights a week and see exactly the same thing happening every time, they begin, more or less unconsciously, to believe that life is like that. They begin to suppose that all rich men spend their evenings in questionable night-clubs, and their mornings in seducing their stenographers. They begin to judge the good looks of a man by comparing him with Mr. Douglas Fairbanks or Mr. John Gilbert, and the beauty of a woman by comparing her with Miss Mae Murray or Miss Betty Bronson. The fact that some rich men do lead wasteful lives, that Messrs. Fairbanks and Gilbert *are* handsome, and that Miss Bronson and Miss Murray *are* beautiful, is beside

the point. The harm lies in setting up a fixed standard of conduct or good looks, or rather in accepting one invented for us by a possibly unqualified producer in California. The damage is of an insidious nature. It is often overlooked or not realized. In a hundred years, when the movies have standardized everything, dictated our opinions to us, and arranged our reactions, everyone will see, too late, how disastrous their influence has been. As Mr. I. A. Richards was the first to point out, people who underrate the importance of art are apt to forget the effects of bad art.

Art, as we saw in Chapter I, is not an affair of stock situations, but something very individual, the record of a particular experience of a man when his powers were at their best. It is worse than useless to be told that the good always triumphs in the end, when there are plenty of instances to the contrary, and when the issue depends on all sorts of special circumstances that are never the same in every case. There is considerable food for thought along these lines, and the reader may amuse himself, to his own profit, by watching films carefully and seeing the sly poison at work.

ADAPTATIONS

The practice of adapting famous novels to the screen has recently become popular among film-directors, and in theory, the idea is excellent, as

introducing to large numbers of people novels of which they otherwise might never have heard. In nine cases out of ten, however, it does more harm than good. The novels are adapted so that their authors would scarcely recognize them. The screen-version of Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* was, for example, so completely altered from the original, that three-quarters of the point of the story was lost. I am told that the reason for this was that the public demands a happy-ending, an instance of the bad effects that Economics may have on art. This desire for a happy-ending arises from a desire to be consoled. People do not like to be upset. They like to come away feeling that, after all, "all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds," a self-complacent sentiment which is closely akin to that of the ostrich who hides his head when he sees something unpleasant.

With happy-endings, arranged for the purpose of lulling people into a sense of false security, art is not concerned. A good artist deals with his own experiences which he finds valuable, no matter into what dangerous or terrifying places they may lead him. "Safety-first," while an admirable slogan for bus-riders, is not to be applied to the more important activities of life.

SUB-TITLES

Another, and equally unrecognized source of

harm connected with the movies, is located in the sub-titles. These usually appear to be composed by men of no intellect whatsoever and frequently contain glaring grammatical errors. It is unfortunately true that many people read nothing but Tabloid newspapers and sub-titles, and it is a question which of the two contain the worst English. This leads to the creation of a standard of writing which consists of stringing words together thus: Youth . . . Passionate . . . Throbbing . . . Thoughtless . . . Unfettered, and to a standard of wit which deals in bad puns and senseless jokes. Here again the reader may find profitable entertainment in noticing the absurdities and meaningless nonsense contained in the sub-titles of the films he witnesses. In this way he will find his critical faculty awakening very rapidly, and this will lead to greater appreciation of better things.

GOOD FILMS

We may now turn to the miserably small percentage of good films, and see how they may help us in our desire to appreciate art. The kind of work in which the producers seem to know their business best is the straightforward historical, or semi-historical, picture, although *The Beloved Rogue* was an example of how *not* to do an historical picture. The practice of engaging the services of an expert adviser, and the lack of opportunity for cheap

symbolism, combine to make the historical picture an enjoyable and interesting entertainment. Such films as *Robin Hood* and *Old Ironsides*, while never achieving the dignity of great art, have a certain educational value in showing the life of other days and people, and contain few really bad features. The stories are simple, and if strict historical truth is often sacrificed, there is considerable compensation in the fact that interest in history is awakened.

Another class of film which deserves particular notice is that in which the photography and scenery have been managed by Germans. The Germans, in their feeling for beautiful lighting-effects and stage settings, are far in advance of Americans, and have shown the possibilities of achieving results that the size of an ordinary theatre-stage makes impossible. In such films as *He Who Gets Slapped*, where the story and production are good too, *Metropolis* and *The Nibelungs*, where the stories and production were bad or mismanaged, the exquisite lighting and setting stand out as something of high artistic value.

Although it may seem invidious to single out particular films for mention, there is one to which, because it seemed to me to come near to being a really fine piece of art, I should like to draw attention. This was *A Woman of Paris* directed by that prince of comedians, Mr. Charles Chaplin. The director succeeded in avoiding nearly all the faults to which directors are prone. He was specially successful in

avoiding the overemphasis and general unnecessary extravagance in every matter that are such regrettable features of most films. He never did more than was necessary. Where only suggestion was needed he used suggestion. As an example one incident may be mentioned, that in which the heroine is waiting at the railroad station for the train that is to take her to Paris. The arrival of the train is simply indicated by the lights from the windows moving along a wall, which is entirely sufficient for the purpose. A less thoughtful director would have shown us the train rushing through the night and slowing down into the station, thus overemphasizing what was really an unimportant occurrence, and drawing our attention away from the center of the story. It is a pity that Mr. Chaplin did not discover earlier his powers in this line.

THE FUTURE

Looking ahead it cannot be said that the prospects are bright. The economic influences are enormously strong. The first consideration in the mind of the director must always be: "Will the public like it?" and public taste is notoriously bad. It is a vicious circle. The movies will not improve until public taste has improved, and public taste is rapidly being made worse than it ever was before by the movies. It is as examples of bad art that the movies may be useful. Every effort must be made

to show the public why they are bad art, for if this is not done the movies may become a serious menace. Their educational value is more than balanced by the damage they do to our ways of thinking. They have an immensely wide appeal, and if only the appeal of good art were one-tenth as wide, there would be considerably more ground for optimism about the future. We have made physical comfort a fine art and, in doing so, have forgotten about that which controls the body, the mind.

CHAPTER IX

AMERICAN ART AND THE FUTURE

"Of the people, by the people, and for the people."

100% AMERICANISM

WE are hearing a good deal of something called 100% Americanism and are, at times, inclined to associate it with ignorance, self-assertiveness and self-satisfaction. It is what Mr. Sinclair Lewis attacked in *Babbitt*. It is what Mr. H. L. Mencken attacks, in spite of himself, with monotonous regularity, once a month in *The American Mercury*. Mention of it brings to our minds such faintly ridiculous phrases as "Keep King George out of Chicago!" and "God's own country." Some Americans are very apologetic about it. Nevertheless it is, in a sense, what is most needed in American art. Since 1776 America has been slowly developing from a European colony, into a country with national characteristics of its own. Her mushroom prosperity has given her a position in the world, unprecedented for so youthful a nation. But in other matters the progress has been marked by its usual

slowness. There is a long way to go yet. In her education, her art, and her thought, America is still behind the older countries. Some of her citizens, discouraged by the perfectly natural slowness of her development, are apt to look back with longing eyes across the Atlantic, and indulge in indiscriminate admiration of what they see there. Others take the opposite line of regarding Europe as a home for out-of-date fogies from which America can learn nothing. Each of these methods is as bad as the other. Both are intensely narrow-minded. The object, as I see it, of all good Americans should be to combine a willingness to learn, with a desire to build up a great and individual tradition.

The fact that, as yet, America has produced few great artists and that her earlier ones inevitably copied European ideas, has produced a tendency still to look to Europe for inspiration, to go to London, Paris, Rome, Berlin, for models. Thus it is that the vice of imitation has grown in strength, and the conviction that American art, to be good art, must spring from American soil, has correspondingly weakened. How this has happened and the possibilities of counteracting it, may best be studied under the separate headings of each of the arts.

POETRY

In poetry the vice is particularly prevalent. The great mass of modern poetry (and this is true of

English poetry as well) is frankly imitative. Admiration of the Elizabethan or Romantic poets has led to repeating over and over again the things they said and their manner of saying them. If we remember that the attitudes towards life and love that existed then have changed utterly since, we shall see that imitation of them can never be good art. It cannot be a communication of the poet's experience, but simply a communication of somebody else's. There are fortunately several poets at work in America today who have abandoned this useless method, and are producing good and original poetry that is essentially American. The fact that the poetry of Mr. T. S. Eliot (a Middle-Westerner, although he lives in England) and Mr. Vachel Lindsay, was received with such widespread horror, while that of Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson, who reflects the poet Robert Browning in every other line, is equally widely admired, shows the general inability to accept new ideas that is in existence.

It is fatally easy to mistake imitative poetry for the real thing. Sometimes it is so cleverly done that only close acquaintance and very careful reading aloud will reveal the falsity. It is not, moreover, the obviously bad poetry which everyone can recognize as being bad, but the apparently good poetry, which is likely to do the most damage.

PAINTING

Turning to painting, there seems to be at present, little work of outstanding merit. Imitation of French artists, in particular, is rife, but so far America has contributed nothing new and vital to the art, with the exception of the daring brilliance of the late Mr. John Sargent, and the impressionistic work of John Whistler. But there is the possibility of a new star appearing on the horizon at any moment. I have scanned recent exhibitions at Boston, New York, Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia and have failed to detect one. Perhaps others have been more fortunate. In the realm of satire we may mention the work of Mr. John Held, Jr., familiar to readers of *Life*. This artist, while not having the feeling for design that distinguished such great satirists as William Hogarth, has, nevertheless, achieved an individual and well-defined method of showing the diseases of the age. The fact that his pictures are chiefly looked at by those whom they satirize perhaps accounts for his being unappreciated.

SCULPTURE

In the realm of sculpture there seem to be more indications of a new national movement. Mr. Jacob Epstein, whose work has aroused such un-

favorable comment in England, has introduced new and vital features. Their unfamiliarity has resulted in their being misunderstood, and the ridiculous controversy about the fine panel erected in Hyde Park, London, should be sufficient to prove to the "back-to-Europe" reactionaries that the English are not all born lovers of art. Mention has already been made of the memorial to Mrs. Adams, by the late Mr. Augustus St. Gaudens that stands in Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, D. C. In a more conservative way than Mr. Epstein's work, it is perhaps the finest piece of sculpture in America, even the finest individual achievement of any American since the beginnings of the nation.

ARCHITECTURE

The passion for the past and for the imitating European traditions has been more marked in Architecture than in any other art. Americans visiting Europe are naturally charmed by the mellowness in house and church that is lacking in the United States. The houses of England, the cathedrals of France, the palaces of Rome—all these exercise, by their antiquity and splendor, a fascination on American visitors. The result has been the plague of Gothic architecture that has smitten the U. S. A. Now Gothic was the record of a state-of-mind that never has existed, and never will exist,

on this side of the Atlantic. It is essentially medieval, essentially European. Consequently it is out of place in America. Visit Harvard square and you will see something that belongs to America and could not conceivably belong elsewhere. Visit the University of Virginia and you will experience the same feeling. Visit, on the other hand, the Universities of Yale and Princeton and you will see, excellent imitation certainly, but imported, unacclimated, ungenuine architecture. It seems a very great pity that these two universities should have been content to copy England, instead of creating something that was American. It is a poor compliment to one's own country to imitate another.

Fortunately, there are plenty of indications that America is going to produce a style of fine architecture that is entirely her own. In the flowering of national greatness it has usually been the case that architecture has preceded the other arts in the order of development, and, as we saw in Chapter V, the skyscraper style is rapidly becoming more and more important. We must, however, beware of thinking that, because a building is a skyscraper, it is therefore necessarily good. There is a vast difference between fine examples of the style, such as the Bush Terminal Building or the Telephone Building, and such clumsy edifices as the Paramount Theatre and the Times Building (all in New York City).

MUSIC

In music, too, there are signs of a new movement. In Chapter VII we defended Jazz against some of the charges brought against it, and stated that it might well bring something new into the old traditions. We are rather too apt to think that all the great artistic movements of the past were received with instant applause, a belief that is not borne out by facts. Any movement which breaks away from tradition has got to fight against those people who always keep their eyes fixed on the past. Jazz is feeling its way. At present it is mixed up with the cruder kind of despairing sexuality, and is deliberately intended to arouse the sexual impulses of dancers, a fact which not many will care to admit. But it does contain something vital, something that has Negro origins and has been filtered through the sophistication of the white races. There are, besides Jazz, other movements in American music today. One set of composers are trying to express concrete ideas by their music. This usually takes the form of clever imitation—the sound of the sea, or the howling of the winds, and shows nothing new, and nothing that Wagner, Chopin, Mendelssohn and Debussy (European composers) have not already done better. The death of Arthur Griffes, when he had produced nothing more than a Symphony and a few exquisite songs, has removed a

man who might have been America's greatest musical genius. But there are no signs of indifference among the present generation and we may look for some valuable developments before very long. ,

AMERICAN INDIFFERENCE

It is lamentable to observe how very little interest is taken in art by the people of America today, and how the few who take interest are intent upon Europe rather than upon their own country. I am firmly convinced that, not until Americans can find art in their own country, will they begin to take a genuine interest in it. And by art I do not mean the imported variety but genuine, 100% American art, as individual, in its way, as the frescoes of Umbria and the elegant conceits of eighteenth-century France. Nowadays it is unfashionable to write a book for a cause. At least among the intelligentsia, propaganda is regarded as being something a trifle vulgar. Well, this book is shameless propaganda. It is written because I believe in the value of art and in its necessity for America.

CONCLUSION

I believe that, among that class of people known as Radicals, which means roughly those who think, there is a growing feeling that this situation is a disgrace to a great country. The term Radical is

political in its significance, but the time has come for it to be extended to other matters. The tendency to think that art means collecting a lot of pictures that Europe is too poor to keep, and having an expensive box at the Opera, has got to be counteracted. The dabblers must be discouraged, for art can do very well without them. We have got to begin thinking about art and thinking extremely hard. Otherwise we may banish it for ever, and "where there is no vision the people perish." Not until people have begun to take a serious interest in it, will America produce a great, individual, and worthy tradition of her own. *Per aspera ad astra.* "Through toil to the stars."

CHAPTER X

BOOKS ON ART

Reading maketh a full man.—Bacon.

THIS book is in the nature of an introduction to the many questions that are connected with art. If the reader is sufficiently interested in a vast subject he may want to go into it further. There are innumerable books at his disposal, but their quantity is such that he might be at loss where to begin. This chapter is designed to provide him with some suggestions for following up what he has read here. I have purposely included some books with which I do not agree, so that the various theories may be weighed against each other, and the reader may form his own estimate of the value of some of my statements.

As an introduction to the system of values outlined in Chapter I, *Science and Poetry*, by I. A. Richards (Norton, New York) can be heartily recommended. It discusses the probable effect that

An asterisk (*) has been placed against the titles of these books when they were mentioned in the text.

the advance of science may have upon poetry, and the influence that poetry can have upon our lives. It serves as a prelude to the same author's *Principles of Literary Criticism* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York) the most important critical work of the century. Its somewhat involved phraseology makes it difficult reading for the beginner, but, sooner or later, an attempt should be made to master it. If the reader has followed the argument of the present volume he should be able, with a little patience, to understand Mr. Richards' train of thought. He will fill in the gaps which brevity has here made necessary.

The Foundations of Aesthetics, by C. K. Ogden, I. A. Richards, and James Wood (George Allen and Unwin, London) is a useful book. It gives an account of the sixteen most important attempts that have been made to answer the question "What is Art?" It is remarkably undogmatic, and submits each to a penetrating scrutiny, reaching no particular conclusion, but providing material for a great deal of thought. The fact that it assumes some initial knowledge in the reader makes it a book for the more practised student.

Art, by Clive Bell (Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York) was referred to in Chapter I, where the theory that it expounds was rather summarily dismissed. But Mr. Bell knows more about painting than I can ever hope to know, and it would be nar-

row-minded not to include such a stimulating and entertaining book in this list. With many of its statements I am in complete agreement, although the main theory strikes me as inadequate. Since I also attacked Signor Benedetto Croce it would be ungracious to omit any mention of his *Essence of Aesthetic* (Heinemann, London) which presents his theory in a nutshell. The reader may think differently from me when he has read it, and it should be stated that to many Croce is gospel. A brief account of his philosophy appears in Mr. Will Durant's *Story of Philosophy*, and a longer one in Mr. E. F. Carritt's *Theory of Beauty*, while it is attacked with pitiless vigor in Signor Giovanni Papini's *Four and Twenty Minds*.

Easy to understand, and containing much useful information, is *The Rudiments of Criticism*, by E. A. Greening-Lamborn (Oxford University Press). As an incentive to reading poetry it is admirable, and although the author's theory of art does not happen to tally with my own, I know of few books that can be more heartily recommended to the beginner. It contains some of the children's verse mentioned in Chapter III.

Miss Margaret Bulley's *Art and Counterfeit* (Methuen, London) has been already described in the text. It is an invaluable book and contains, besides the illustrations, many extracts from writers on art. The absence of an American edition is much

to be regretted. Stimulating and interesting is Mr. Willard Huntington Wright's *The Future of Painting* (Huebsch, New York), a small pamphlet sold at fifty cents. Mr. Wright takes the view that an entirely new art, which he calls the art of color, and which is distinct from painting, is evolving at the present day. What he has to say is said briefly and clearly, and should not be overlooked by the serious student.

Containing photographs of most of the important pictures in the European Galleries *Die Galerien Europas* (Hanfstaengl, München, Germany) is highly to be recommended. It may be obtained from F. Denks' Art Shop, 153 West 57th Street, New York City, and would be of considerable service to any who have not access to the pictures themselves.

Although it is in no sense a modern book, Lessing's *Laocoön* of which many inexpensive translations are on the market, is of considerable interest. It discusses the limitations of the various arts, making the famous Laocoön group in the Vatican museum the starting point of the argument. Lessing had never seen this statue and makes some queer remarks about it; but he was the first to define the limits of painting, sculpture and poetry, and much that he says is still relevant today.

The Enjoyment of Architecture, by Mr. Talbot Foulkner Hamlin (Scribner's, New York) contains

a lot of useful information. The objection to it is that it considers Proportion, Design, Decoration, and so forth as ends in themselves, instead of means of communication. Nevertheless, if the reader will keep in mind that all art is a communication of an experience, he should find much in this book that will assist him in understanding architecture.

Praise has already been accorded to Mr. Percy Scholes' *Listener's Guide to Music* (Oxford University Press, London and New York). It explains easily and simply such things as the construction of a symphony and a fugue, and the composition of an orchestra, and contains illustrations of all orchestral instruments. Like the last book mentioned it tends to ignore the true purpose of art and to regard it in a too purely objective light.

Although it does not deal with art, a word should be said about Dr. J. B. Watson's *Behaviorism* (The People's Institute Publishing Company, New York). Dr. Watson's theory is too unsupported by evidence to be accepted as yet, but his practice is highly instructive. Those who find difficulty in thinking of art as something which happens inside the artist, and inside themselves, and not something which is located on a piece of canvas, would do well to read the behaviorist's view of life. It will probably dismay them, but it will, at the same time, make them think.

The books mentioned above are simply a few of

the many. Once they have been mastered the reader can launch out on his own, and he will find that the more he reads the more he will want to read. Only recently have the veils that surrounded art been torn asunder so that it can be examined in a scientific way. It is mistaken to suppose that this will destroy the value of art. The fascination of a mystery is not that it is a mystery, but that it is a potential discovery.

CHAPTER XI

SUMMARY AND REVIEW

"Comes there any more of it?"—The Taming of the Shrew.

I AM concluding this book with a short summary of each chapter, accompanied by some questions that the reader may ask himself, or answer briefly in a notebook. As mentioned in the Introduction we have been dealing chiefly with ideas, which are elusive things, and tend to merge into a confused blur. It is hoped that this summary may assist the reader in putting his ideas in order and in making a second reading of the book, which he may find desirable, more profitable than the first.

Chapter One deals with the question "What is Art?" and shows the relationship between the values of life and the values of art. What are the objections to founding a theory of art on Beauty? Significant Form? Intuition? In what terms is it best to define Art? What is meant by successful Communication? What is an Experience? What is the best kind of life we can lead? Describe a

failure to achieve this? What is a valuable experience? What factors modify our system of values?

Chapter Two shows the relation of the artist to the system of values set forth in Chapter One, and goes on to suggest a general method of approach to works of art. Why are the popular ideas about artists mistaken? How would you describe an artist? Why are the lives of many artists apparently unhappy? Why must an artist have a good memory? Why must an artist be, to some extent, normal? Why does he appear to be abnormal? Can an artist be made? What is a work of art? How should we respond to a work of art? Why is art valuable?

Chapter Three suggests ways of reading poetry which may help to secure the fullest possible response to the artist's experience. What is the essential difference between poetry and prose? What is the unit of poetry? How does this influence the artist? Why is it important to read poetry aloud? How should poetry be approached? How does the value of art alter with the passing of time? How do our beliefs influence our appreciation of poetry? Should we seek a message in poetry?

Chapter Four suggests the most profitable ways of looking at pictures, again with the object of securing the fullest possible response. What is the chief problem with which the painter had to deal? Explain what you understand by the phrase "the

suggestion of the Third Dimension." What is the wrong way of looking at a picture? The right way? Why? How should we regard the color in a picture? What is representation? What is Selection? What is meant by Design? What is the place of the Subject of a picture in relation to the design? What is the best way of understanding the difference between good and bad art?

Chapter Five shows how architecture, in spite of its economic and utilitarian limitations, is also an art. What are the economic limitations imposed upon an architect? What was the earliest type of building? What followed? What is the newest type? Once again, what is Design? Why should ornamentation be made with reference to the whole? What considerations may wrongly influence us in looking at a building? Why are they wrong? How are windows important with reference to the design?

Chapter Six applies the general principles of the first two chapters to sculpture. What are the limitations of the sculptor? How does the position of a piece of sculpture influence the way in which we look at it? What is meant by Touch-imagery? How do we make use of it in looking at sculpture? How does a sculptor suggest movement? What is meant by distortion? How is it used?

Chapter Seven offers some suggestions for listen-

ing to music so as to obtain the fullest response. What distinguishes music from painting? In what way is the medium of music unique? What is the relation of a performer to the composer, and to the listener? Why does music have such a universal appeal? Why is it wrong to like music because of its personal associations? Why is it necessary to be familiar with music in order to understand it? What are the possibilities of Jazz? Why is imitative music bad? Upon what should our judgment of music be founded?

Chapter Eight deals with the Movies. Why is the average film bad? How may it seriously affect our ways of thinking? Why is it bad to insist on a happy ending?

Chapter Nine is propaganda for a wider interest in art, and particularly in American art. Why is imitation bad art? Why is it bad to copy the Elizabethan poets? The French painters? Gothic architecture? How should works of art in Europe be regarded?

I should like to conclude this book with an extract from *The Principles of Literary Criticism*, by I. A. Richards, a book which has already been praised in these pages. This extract is a better summing up of the whole theory of art that we have been discussing than any other that I know. It may help to clarify and crystallize what has been read in this book: "The arts are our storehouse of

recorded values. They spring from and perpetuate hours in the lives of exceptional people, when their control and command of experience is at its highest, hours when the varying possibilities of existence are most clearly seen and the different activities which may arise are most exquisitely reconciled, hours when habitual narrowness of interest or confused bewilderment are replaced by an intricately wrought composure. Both in the genesis of a work of art, in the creative moment, and in its aspect as a vehicle of communication, reasons can be found for giving to the arts a very important place in the theory of Value. They record the most important judgments we possess as to the values of experience. They form a body of evidence which, for lack of a serviceable psychology by which to interpret it, and through the desiccating influence of abstract Ethics, has been left almost untouched by professed students of value. An odd omission, for without the assistance of the arts we could compare very few of our experiences, and without such comparison we could hardly hope to agree as to which are to be preferred. Very simple experiences—a cold bath in an enamelled tin, or running for a train—may to some extent be compared without elaborate vehicles; and friends exceptionally well acquainted with one another may manage some rough comparisons in ordinary conversation. But subtle or recondite experiences are for most men incom-

municable and indescribable, though social conventions or terror of the loneliness of the human situation may make us pretend to the contrary. In the arts we find the record, in the only form in which these things can be recorded, of the experiences which have seemed worth having to the most sensitive and discriminating persons. Through the obscure perception of this fact the poet has been regarded as a seer and the artist as a priest, suffering from usurpations. The arts, if rightly approached, supply the best data available for deciding what experiences are more valuable than others. The qualifying clause is all-important however. Happily there is no lack of glaring example to remind us of the difficulty of approaching them rightly."

COURTESY IN ART APPRECIATION

"A word to the wise is sufficient"

THIS book has been designed to help the reader in his appreciation and understanding of the various arts. However, there is a last word that may be said which we think of some importance. It concerns the relationship of the individual to other people and their aesthetic enjoyment. Although its appeal is primarily individual, the appreciation of art carries with it a social quality. It is something one likes to talk about, or feels one is expected to talk about, to show appreciation, to let others know that the experience is pleasurable. It is just here that it is very easy to infringe on the enjoyment of others—and a very small infringement can create a very large annoyance.

The important thing in this connection is to bear in mind that at the presentation of any type of art other people are just as engrossed as you are, in their several ways, in their own appreciations. Express as much of yours as you must, but keep most of it for yourself or for those friends who are interested. You will find that conversation about what you have heard or seen can be carried on just as absorbingly after the concert or the visit to the gallery or museum. In fact, you will find it much easier to talk at length about art when you are in comfortable surroundings and with a small group of friends.

One may almost list a group of DONT's for guidance. For example, at concerts, don't beat time, don't sway with the rhythm, don't tap on the floor, don't talk, don't hand programs and other things back and forth while the music is in progress. At picture galleries, don't point out conspicuously everything you see. Certainly you should not hesitate to talk to your friends if you want to, but in talking don't pitch your voice so that others can't avoid hearing you. If you enjoy reading the captions of motion pictures aloud, do it in as low a voice as you can because even a gentle murmur may distract others. In the theater, as at concerts, one of the surest ways of annoying people is by conversation. If you have read the play, or the book upon which the play is based, you may find it irresistible to tell your neighbors what is going to happen, but you can be sure they will dislike it—and may dislike you. Nor will sharing your candy and rattling the paper make you more popular.

Have a good time with art—but let everyone else enjoy the same privilege.





